Albion College
Library

WITHDRAWN
FROM
ALBION COLLEGE LIBRARY

Albion, Michigan

BV
4241
.P5

255145

STOCKWELL-MUDD LIBRARIES
BV4241.P5
Preachers and preaching in Detroit
3 5044 00221 6304

PREACHERS AND PREACHING IN DETROIT

Preachers
and
Preaching in Detroit

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION
AND LIFE-SKETCHES BY
RALPH MILTON PIERCE, D.D.
Minister, Grand River Methodist Episcopal Church, Detroit, Michigan

NEW YORK CHICAGO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, MCMXXVI, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

BV
4241
.P5

955145

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 75 Princes Street

To

A PREACHER FATHER,

William Richards Pierce, D.D.

"A man sent from God."

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 9
Ralph Milton Pierce

I. THE GIFT OF PEACE. (*Phil. 4:7*) 19
Gaius Glenn Atkins

II. THE PATRIOTIC CHURCH. (*No text*) . . . 37
George Brewer

III. REDEEMING THE TIME. (*Eph. 5:15-16*) . . . 53
Chester B. Emerson

IV. FUTURE MONARCHS. (*Matt. 5:5*) 69
John Wellington Hoag

V. THE HEEL OF ACHILLES. (*I Cor. 10:12*) . . 83
Lynn Harold Hough

VI. IMITATION OF CHRIST. (*Luke 23:34*) . . . 95
Edgar DeWitt Jones

VII. TRAITS OF THE RELIGIOUS SOUL. (*II Cor. 4*) . 109
Alvin E. Magary

VIII. COMING GIANTS AND THE ARISTOCRACY OF THE FUTURE. (*Gen. 6:4*) 121
S. S. Marquis

IX. THE EYES OF A YOUNG MAN. (*II Kings 6:17*) . 135
Minot C. Morgan

X. TYRANT SERVANTS. (*Mark 2:27*) 149
Reinhold Neibuhr

XI. KEEPING THE PROPHET ALIVE. (*I Kings 17:13*). 163
Arthur Lee Odell

XII. LIVING THE IMMORTAL LIFE. (*Luke 10:28*) . 175
Augustus P. Reccord

XIII. CHRIST IS RISEN. (*I Cor. 15:20*) 187
C. H. Ruesskamp

XIV. Brook and Barrel. (*I Kings 17:16*) . . . 203
Merton S. Rice

XV. Behold, the Sower. (*Matt. 13:3*) 219
Warren L. Rogers

XVI. That They Might Know Him. (*John 17:3*) . 233
Mark F. Sanborn

XVII. Ordained to Eternal Life. (*Acts 13:48*) . . 247
William L. Stidger

XVIII. The Christian as a Victorious Personality. (*II Cor. 2:14*) 263
Robert White

XIX. The Master's Compassion. (*Mark 6:34*) . . 275
Robert William Woodroofe

INTRODUCTION

This book is being printed and offered to seekers after the good things of God. It is not parochial; but has a widely extended mission. There is no thought of attempting a systematic treatise on Christianity. The sermons included represent no particular school of doctrine concerning the things of the spirit; but they do represent the great preaching which obtains in this notable and growing metropolis.

The city of Detroit is known widely as an industrial and commercial town, with myriads of huge and grimy smokestacks belching their black dust up against the dark blue and painting with sooty letters " Modern Efficiency " across the sky. There is much talk about the rapid growth of the city, striding ahead every year by scores of thousands. But greatness does not consist in material splendor any more today than it did with Caliph Aberrahman III of Spain, nor does it consist in size any more than it did in the days of Nineveh. Detroit is " The Dynamic City " in the sense that it is one of the world centers of trade and manufacture; but the spiritual elements in her life are even more worthy of serious thought and appreciation, for " back of the mill is the sun and the shower and the Heavenly Father's good will."

Great churches abound here; and multitudes attend the divine services. A strong emphasis has been placed

upon evangelism—a stirring and wholesome evangelism which is not incompatible with religious education and the prophetic spirit. Laymen and preachers alike have been faithful to this trust, lifting up Jesus Christ as the Lord of all men and as the Lord of every phase of human life. In picking up the Saturday night newspapers one does not find the startling array of non-descript sermon subjects which once blotted the page and brought contempt on religion. Some do look upon religion as a circus and the church as a menagerie; but in most cases there is an infallible note of seriousness and a commanding emphasis on the eternal, assisting men in the strange discovery of the quiet dignity, the ennobling motives, and the timeless summons which religion offers to humanity in this perplexed and ungrounded age.

Another element which makes for success is the notable spirit of co-operation which exists among the churches. This fine spirit of unity exhibits itself in the remarkable Lenten and Good Friday services; in the city wide summer and winter evangelistic campaigns; in the daily-vacation Bible schools; and in the Theater meetings in the Fall. The kindly Christian graces and administrative leadership of Dr. Morton C. Pearson, city secretary of the Council of Churches, and of the denominational Superintendents have had large part in this noble expression of united mind and endeavor.

Nearly four hundred Protestant preachers are proclaiming the Good News every Sunday in Detroit. With unusual ability and serious application to their

high tasks, these men are calling multitudes to the quiet places of prayer and praise. No measure can be given to the moral and spiritual impact made on the city by these men of God; no limit can be placed upon the value of this sacrificial service.

Standing at the head of this notable list are several preachers of international or national renown. Perhaps no city in America holds so many outstanding preachers within her borders. These men of letters and of the spirit do more than bring great prophecies to their own people. They constantly challenge every other preacher to do his best in the name of Christ. It is a unique privilege to preach under such demanding inspiration.

What Victor Hugo said of his day is a serious summons to modern America:

" The age is great and strong. Her chains are riven.

* * * * *

Mid the vast splendour of an age that glows,
One thing, O Jesus, fills my breast with terror;
The echo of His voice still feebler grows."

The seemingly insuperable weight of the city, with its multitude of folks, its congested foreign quarters, and its attendant crime and sensuality rests like the burden of the Titan upon the backs and souls of men until the spiritual is well nigh crushed out. And so the eternal task of the preacher is to remind men of God—a loving, demanding, persuading God; to make real such a God to the thinking of men; and to re-emphasize the fact which Browning has so well put: " Progress is the law of life; man is not man as yet."

What a tremendous task it is "to let God see that you at least are a sound workman, with no need to be ashamed of the way you handle the word of Truth."

Paul Elmer More is quite right in his statements that the cure for democracy is not more democracy but better democracy and that the need is to provide for a natural aristocracy. Such is the task of the preacher. He is dedicated to the proposition of building up a vanguard in civilization which will lead the mass of the people out into the higher and larger life. His task is to put spiritual motive and spiritual power into present day leadership. There is a lesson in the parable of the Sower which is not always stressed. The lesson is that the good ground will bear a rich harvest, and that we should plant the seed of Truth in fertile soil. We talk about saving the world for Christ; and our missionary program is never cut large enough, whether it be home or foreign missions.

But before we can save the world, we must save America. No word of caution is more needed in this superficial day than this,—we must not become blind leaders of the blind, lest through our false leadership all peoples fall into the ditch of materialism. Right now America needs the Idealism of Jesus, and she will never be won to Him except the mind of her leaders is sought and won over to His principles and spirit. The preacher who fails to capture the mind of the community for Christ is signally failing in the great enterprise, for he is failing to utilize the good ground for the seed of God's word. On the other hand, the man who, in the wise strategy of the Kingdom, reaches out and

up to the high thought levels of far-visioned men and presents the claims of Christ in modern thought forms, will multiply Christ's influence many fold. The spiritual multiplication table is a truly marvelous affair, for one against one in the spiritual realm is often one hundred and frequently one thousand when Christ is the first one and a thoughtful, reverent constructive leader is the other one.

The veteran temptations which environ the modern day preacher are legion. The one which besets most powerfully today is the temptation to give way to the tyranny of tradition and to make as absolute truth for all time the beliefs and ideals of the fathers. After all, openmindedness and a sense of the prerogatives of the future are essential tools in the ministry. The preacher who attempts to dry up the source streams of new life and power is recreant to his trust. The minds of men need to be deep-furrowed at times, that they may get out of the fallow into the fertile. We believe that not only jesting Pilate but all the world is asking the question, " What is truth? " Certain it is that we get on toward God not by backward looking but by forward looking, for there is no heresy so subtle or so blighting as the heresy of the closed mind.

The preacher of today finds himself in a period of transition. He is in the midst of the renewal of hostility between science and established creed, such as raged in England in the middle of the nineteenth century. At that time Lord Tennyson entered into the conflict by accepting the modern current of thought; and, for his stand, he has been called " the poet of

compromise," which is an unfortunate term to be used in connection with one who wrote "In Memoriam." Tennyson gave to his generation an interpretation of the higher things of life in the thought forms that were modern and in accord with the intelligence standard of his time. A careful study of the teachings of Jesus will reveal that He followed this method with His disciples. And so the man who would reveal God to men in this day must accommodate his message to the mind of his hearers; and he must realize the right of the mind of humanity to change and grow in its appreciation of the truth of all life. Using the word "compromise" in the sense of an appreciation of new and higher values, it would be right to say that the man who proclaims the Word of God in this changing period must be not only a preacher of insight but also a preacher of compromise.

Another temptation would lead preachers to shape their ministry according to the will of the people. This is a critical age; and many preachers are succumbing to the demand of human voices, becoming mere spokesmen of men and not prophets of God with a distinct spiritual charism. How often the modern pulpit pitches its note to the traditions of the fathers, pleasing the ear of the congregation but failing to lift the souls of men to God.

The third temptation would rob a man of his right to give pre-eminent place in his own thinking to the spoken message. There are other things which a minister should do; but this one thing he must do well. In this day of efficiency there is a temptation which

would rob the preacher of his right to think deeply of life's problems and privileges and to carry an imperial message with an imperial voice. It would deprive him of preaching compelling sermons by making him a mechanical supervisor of the social side of the Church and a busy counselor in civic affairs. Every true preacher follows Christ in these words: "For their sake I sanctify myself." In this he dedicates his utmost powers to make every sermon ring out as the voice of God to heart-burdened men. System needs to obtain in the Church as well as elsewhere, and there is a real demand for administration in ecclesiastical affairs; but system without spirit is vain, and administration without the clarion voice is powerless.

The sermons which are written here come from the pens of busy men. Placed before every sermon is the Driving Motive of the writer. In brief and trenchant phrase he reveals the secret of his ministry, the source of his power, the faith that holds him to his task, and the objective of his life service. Practically every man is in charge of a great church in this tremendous city which is a tangled web of human triumph and despair. It is also well to note that only men in the active pastorate have been selected for this book.

Against insuperable odds these men have kept to the high levels of spiritual vision, and have felt for themselves as well as for others the tanging sense of spiritual power. They have been selected as worthy representatives from the many effective preachers in Detroit, who have established themselves as denominational or interdenominational leaders. Looking from without,

men are bound to notice with considerable interest the unusual group of younger preachers in our pulpits. Their voices are now being heard with acceptability and with increasing effectiveness. Many of them are fast becoming outstanding preachers in this day.

One will find here the motive and momentum for living the larger life in Jesus. A careful search will disclose no denominational over-emphasis, no petty quibbling over minor matters, no waste of thought over differences in belief. On the contrary, there is a major emphasis placed upon the everlasting verities, making the book a positive demonstration in Christian unity and spiritual solidarity. Here we have Jesus presented as the divine Son of God—God incarnate in human flesh, revealing to humanity not the physical power, but the spiritual glow and moral splendor of a God suffering for His creation, and calling it to the high ground of moral and spiritual allegiance to Him. Here we have Jesus portrayed as the hope of humanity, the light and life of the world.

RALPH MILTON PIERCE.
Grand River Ave. Methodist Church.
Detroit, Michigan.

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

Dr. Atkins holds a unique place in the life of Detroit; he belongs to the whole city. The great church in which he ministers with much grace, wisdom, and strength is situated on Woodward Avenue, "Where cross the crowded ways of life;" but the greater church of his noble ministry is the city itself. Like several of the outstanding preachers in America, he studied for the profession of law, graduating from the Cincinnati School of Law. Later he studied at Yale Divinity School, and entered the ministry of the Congregational Church in 1895. New England claimed him for his first two pastorates; and, after four years in the First Congregational Church in Detroit, called him back to Providence, R. I., where he ministered with unusual favor from 1910 to 1917. Since that time he has occupied the pulpit at First Church; and his ministry has grown with the years. Dr. Atkins has added a keen spiritual insight to a marked literary and forensic ability. He is more than a mystic; he is a prophet with moral fervor and a deep underlying motive for service. The several books which he has written are widely read by laymen and preachers. Perhaps the greatest contribution made to the study of the various aspects of modern religion has been made by him in his book, "Modern Religious Cults and Movements," written with a quiet appeal to careful reason and without petty intolerance. In reading this sermon, full of imagination, insight, and poetry, one easily discovers the secret of his eminent success in the ministry of our Lord.

THE PREACHER AS PROPHET—The late Bishop Charles D. Williams said that the Christian preacher continues the offices of the Hebrew prophets and the Greek Rhetor. The latter, in the first and second centuries, made a business of finished and winning public speaking for the delectation of his hearers. The Hebrew prophet was for his race and time the voice of God. As the two lines of intellectual and spiritual descent were fused and reborn in patristic Christianity, preaching took over the characteristics of both, and the ethical and spiritual passion and practical address of the prophet was given something of the art and form of classic address. And this should still be the preacher's ideal and the test of worthy preaching. But the prophetic note and spirit are fundamental—that is the substance, the rest is garmenture.

The preacher as a prophet is the interpreter of the Divine meanings of the eddying currents of the individual life, or the massive sweep of the vaster human enterprise. He seeks to establish conduct in the solidity of duty, inform character with God-given goodness, kindle the fire of loving Good Will on the altars of the inner life, and make it the law and force of all human relationships. He is to reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, and hold up the Cross of Christ as the revelation of the method of redemption which is no detached transaction in the Godhead, but a saving participation of the love of God in all the deeply shadowed aspects of our souls and our society, and to establish men in that sense of the presence and power of God, which is the secret of all peace, the ground of all our hope; and this is the greatest task to which any man may be called.—GAIUS GLENN ATKINS.

I

THE GIFT OF PEACE

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS, D.D.
First Congregational Church

"The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ."—PHIL. 4:7.

This text belongs to that high fellowship of texts from which there is really no preaching. The great benedictions and ascriptions are guarded, as were the gates of the forbidden garden, by swords of flame which the preacher challenges at his peril; and as if that were not enough the Apostle adds here a phrase which should arrest any preacher—"which passeth understanding."

But this benediction of St. Paul has, for all its mystic, brooding quality, a central solidity; and, because it is concerned with the greatest quest to which we are committed, we may inquire into its meaning though we confess at the same time that it carries a range of meaning beyond any power of ours to inquire into.

There are words which call us always as from afar, words which carry, could we once come at the realities which lie behind them, some final answer to all our quests; but there is hardly anywhere such a word to move and command us as the word "peace." We are all in some fashion or other seeking peace, whether by

our own hearthstones when the day's work is done, or in our own souls when we have mastered our spiritual foes, or in the contacts of the nations themselves. Our very restlessness is rooted in our search therefor. If you should ask a hundred different men and women what they are really seeking, they will give you a hundred different answers. They will tell you that they are seeking pleasure, or profit, or a livelihood, or power, or forgetfulness, or knowledge, or righteousness, or salvation. But they are really seeking some inner or outer peace, some reconciliation of all the forces by which they are drawn or driven in a satisfaction great enough to quiet their restless spirits. When, therefore, a teacher like St. Paul, rich in manifold experience, undertakes to tell us—though his assurance be at the same time a benediction—the secret of an all-sufficient and enduring peace, he is answering a universal need of the human spirit.

I

He goes high or deep—no matter which—for the secret of it, and tells us in plain words what we are always forgetting: that we shall find peace not in conquest but in surrender, not by creation but by appropriation. Peace, he says, is a gift.

We commonly think of peace as an achievement, and that is true enough, for peace is really a very great achievement; but it is an achievement conditioned by obediences and insights. Or else we think of a peace as an accommodation between competitive forces, which indeed it is; but it is far more than that. Or

else we think of peace as a fruit of conquest, to be gained by having our way with those who oppose us, the peace, that is, of some supreme and resolute will, whether it be the will of the individual or the nation, which has succeeded, and often enough at tragic cost, in breaking down all opposing wills and substituting for their ambitions or challenges its own high and unchallenged affirmations. The only trouble with this kind of peace is that there is nothing permanent about it. Once we have won it, we are not able for any long time to keep it, and so we are always fighting for it and always losing it. There is a better way than that.

I have no mind to consider, to begin with, the more common applications of the word, such as industrial or international peace; just now we are seeking for the roots of it in the states of the soul themselves, for we shall never have peace anywhere, whether between embattled social groups or embattled nations, until we have discovered the secret of inner peace and have made that our departure for any further quest.

So approached, peace is always rooted in some confidence or other. I am sitting in the room in which this is being written, in a reasonable sense of physical security because I have confidence in the floor beneath me and the ceiling above me and the walls which shut me in. If any thing should disturb these very simple confidences, I should be as restless here as Damocles was beneath his sword, wondering when the ceiling would fall or the floor give way.

We walk abroad untroubled because the earth is sure beneath us and the stars maintain their ancient stations

above us. If anything should happen to shake this confidence, as an earthquake, for example, which might at any time be repeated, or the news of an errant planet escaped from its orbit and likely to collide with our little world, the horizons of all our enterprises would be so clouded with apprehension as to make peace of mind impossible. We are at peace with our friends because we trust them. The merchant's confidence in the integrity of those from whom he buys and the dependability of those to whom he sells is the secret of his business place. If anything should disturb this confidence he would be a very troubled merchant and likely to lie awake at night with his worries for company.

Children are at peace in their fathers' houses because they are kept and sheltered by their mothers' love and their fathers' safeguarding strength. The strong and the wise and the good are always a bulwark and a shelter for the weak or the foolish or the helpless.

There is no need to follow such illustrations as these too far, though they bear directly upon St. Paul's noble assurance. Peace is a gift. You possess it really because other persons, or the great forces of the world in which we live, or the steadfastness of the human order about us, reassure us and share with us their peace. Each one of us is a center, as it were, around which are swept always widening circles of safeguarding and peace-affording realities.

The stars communicate their peace to us; they assure us of a steadfast order, vast, unfailing, tranquilly majestic and always saying to us, "Don't fret too

much; you are living in God's good universe wherein each star has its own appointed station; sunrise and sunset follow in blessed and dependable sequence, and where the changing seasons, which are themselves but terrestrial aspects of the cosmic order, will warm a seed bed for the grain you sow and ripen your harvests."

We are greatly in debt for what peace we possess to the safeguarding strength of the city we live in, the commonwealth to which we belong, or the nation of which we are citizens. All night long the streets of our cities are patrolled by the appointed guardians of our peace. The strength of the state reinforces and safeguards the humblest citizens of the state. The pride and passion which we have for our own nation is deeply rooted just here, for a nation is the majestic incarnation of the force of all its citizens, alert and unsleeping and always at our service. We go abroad followed and sheltered by the Stars and Stripes; and, if need be, the entire force of the nation may be mobilized for the protection of a little child.

II

We really find peace, then, as we appropriate in vaster or more intimate ways some aspect or other of this encompassing and assuring strength. One may rewrite the Apostle's benediction and do it no despite: "And the peace of the home which passeth understanding shall guard your hearts and minds; the peace of the integrity of industry shall guard your hearts and your minds; the peace of the city in which you dwell shall guard your hearts and your minds." Or

the peace of the commonwealth, or the peace of the nation beneath whose flag you walk unafraid. Peace, then, is always an appropriation; and the ultimate peace to be appropriated is the peace of God.

The Apostle begins by telling us that this peace passeth understanding, whether in the inner experiences of it or in any examination of its meanings or implications. What words of spiritual imagination or reverent approach shall for a moment penetrate even the frontier of the secret of the peace of God? By so much less may we draw near to the heart of the serenity of the Infinite and All-Powerful.

One must walk here as though upon holy ground, with down-cast eyes, lest looking up he be blinded. But, for all that, we may reverently assume qualities as of necessity implicit in the peace of God. The peace of God is the peace of perfect knowledge, just as so much of our restlessness is the restlessness of ignorance. We are always, as it were, pressing sheer against the curtain of the unknown; we have but to reach out our hands and touch it. We are always facing moments pregnant with unknown fortunes. True enough, we have, because of past experience, a sustaining confidence in the future. We have blessed reason to believe—and this is part of the sharing of the peace of God—that tomorrow will, in the generality of its experiences, repeat today; and we may plan for some far future without being too greatly disturbed about the contingencies which may interrupt or defeat us. We could not live with any kind of peace at all, or dare to plan, if we should surrender ourselves

wholly to the fear of the unknown; but, for all that, the unknown is always there.

We do not understand ourselves or the world we live in. We have at the best only broken conceptions of the wonder and truth of the universe and the order of it. The most commonplace things turn to mystery beneath our touch and face us with perpetual interrogation. The very stones by the wayside protest against our ignorance and the stars reproach us for what we do not know of their far and inaccessible distances. We do not know the content of our own souls, and there are moments when the faces of those who are nearest and dearest to us are veiled with some mystery. Our restlessness is rooted deeply in our passion for a perfect knowledge; it is always being challenged by the reach and quality of our ignorance.

We may reverently assume that in the vision of God all things lie in perfect clarity of understanding. All that has been and all that shall be are gathered up in the compass of the Infinite vision. For Him there is no past beyond His Divine knowledge and no future veiled with mystery. The stars keep His laws; righteousness is His thought, and love, as it were, the beating of His heart.

Now much of this is truly beyond our power clearly to understand. We may easily enough use words whose full content of meaning we can never clearly think through. They are words of approach, groping words, over-burdened words, and yet the meanings they carry are true and right and though the fulness of their meaning reaches us only as the tides of the sea

break at our feet, with all the immensity out of which they come beyond our vision; still, as in the instance of the sea itself, what they bring to us is a true part of a vaster reality. Omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, are too big for us, but we must use them notwithstanding. To change the figure, they are searchlight words casting here and there a penetrating and revealing gleam of light upon the wonder of the Divine nature.

But, just as we may share the peace of the lesser things which surround and safeguard us we may share the peace of God's infinite knowledge. And all this in ways so simple that a child may understand them. Here, as everywhere else, trust is the secret of sharing. Our ignorances do not so much burden us if we know that there is somewhere Someone who knows and cares. Once we are persuaded that the fortunes of life come to us out of God's love and wisdom, we may truly, in the words of the ancient exhortation, "cast our care upon Him." The hymns we love to sing say all this for us better than we can say them for ourselves.

"What Thou shalt today provide
Let me as a child receive;
What tomorrow may betide
Calmly to Thy wisdom leave;
'Tis enough that Thou wilt care;
Why should I the burden bear?"

Or else we sing—

"We know not what the path may be
As yet by us untrod;
But we can trust our all to Thee,
Our Father and our God."

If the future be God's thought for us, we need not fear it; if changing circumstance be the revelation of a loving wisdom, we may go on untroubled; if we find in the unfolding hours some divine purpose radiant and evident, we share the secret of His peace.

We need not be too greatly concerned by the things we do not know. We understand enough to go on by, and we are living in an always growing understanding both of ourselves and the order of which we are a part; and everywhere, as we go deeper and deeper into the meaning of this whole order, we find law and order and supreme reasonableness, luminous simplicities and depth beyond depth of understandable things.

The scientist may be always at peace in his laboratory, the scholar may be always at peace in his quest for any aspect of truth. Truth is there. When we have found it we can understand it, when we can understand it we can live by it, and when we have found it it is always a point of departure for a further and more rewarding search. The first gift of the peace of God is the capacity to resolve our ignorances in His infinite understanding, and rest content in what we do not know as well as what we do know, because He knows it all.

III

The peace of God is the peace of perfect power. We are more fretted by our weaknesses than by almost anything else. The tools we use turn in the hands that would master them. Every one of us is in his way baffled by his own helplessness and weary enough in

the sense of burdens which he should but cannot bear, tasks which he should but cannot accomplish, and results which he would but does not achieve. But there is neither haste nor hindrance in the outgoing power of the Eternal; His creative process moves through a plastic universe until the morning stars sing together for joy that they were made. Civilizations rise and fall, cities are built and forgotten; but God marches on. His is the peace of a power which knows no restraint save His own holiness, and realizes an absolute perfection in the ultimate conception of it, a power whose capacity is unbelievably wide as its vision and whose vision is clear as its power.

Now God shares this peace with us just insofar as we are conscious of being co-workers with Him; every one of us may go on about his own proper business in the assurance of reinforcements which are ample enough for every task. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." I do not mean to say that we can do everything we want to do, or everything we try to do in the way we should like to do it. I do mean to say that as far as our own plain duty is concerned we do have strength enough to go on with. There is a power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness and the secret of the ultimate triumph of righteousness is not in ourselves but in that power. We are, truly enough, its instruments and there is something to kindle as well as to awe us in the thought. God is as dependent upon us for the realization of the Divine purpose in the order of which we are a part, as we are dependent upon Him. But always we may go on as though marching to His

music. We may await His vindication of apparently defeated causes, and His resolution of hopes as yet unfulfilled.

These are not the words of a mystic or the vague statements of a dreamer. If our purposes be such as God may own and bless, He dowers them with His own power and enfranchises them by His own indwelling strength. Whatever strength we have is the strength of God, whether we work with a tempered tool or the forces of spiritual accomplishment or the majesty of the moral order. Whatever peace we have in any accomplishment is His gift because in some fashion, great or small, we have learned to avail ourselves of His reinforcement and be strong in His strength.

IV

The peace of God is the peace of perfect unity between will and desire. The uplands of our souls are swept by an ancient strife between what we are and what we would be, between desire and realization, between what we will and disturbing solicitations. This also the Apostle Paul knew and this he has voiced in a cry which sounds still across the years, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But may we not reverently assume that in the infinite depths of the Divine nature there is no such strife as that? What God wills He desires, and what He desires He wills, and what He wills and desires He is. Here, as nearly as human imagination may approach the secret places of the Most High, is the unapproach-

Albion College Library

able majesty of God. We may dare reverently to affirm that the profoundest peace of God is the peace of serene moral accomplishment.

Now God shares this peace with us. There are many roads to the realization of it, the most direct of which is obedience to His holy will. We are slow in learning how so many of our perturbations, whether of spirit or society, are due to moral disobediences, or else to an embattled reluctance to obey. There are no regions of true peace outside the region of moral integrity and the straight road to moral integrity is moral obedience. In steadfastness to duty, in the brave acceptance of all the challenges of righteousness we discover the secret of a deep and unshaken contentment. More than that, such obedience is always attended by a widening range of social and economic and international stability. The wise and right-living have always known this; long ago Dante phrased it all in one luminous and deathless sentence: "In His will is our peace."

We have always been feeling for this, we have always been telling what we have found in various ways. The mystic has one testimony, the practical-minded man another, the scientist may explain it after his fashion and the moralist after his; but all those who have sought any Divine help in the moral struggle have found it. The Cross itself is the testimony to a saving and sharing love which not only shares the moral struggle with us, so assuring us of ultimate victory, but bears itself the pain and price of fault and failure.

The peace of God is the peace of perfect love. So

much of our restlessness is the restlessness of self-centered lives, over-concerned for themselves, too eager for self-fulfilment and self-satisfaction; but, in the heart of God, love broods eternal. In a divine self-forgetfulness which passes the power of imagination, in the reach of an infinite compassion of which every tide of love whose ripples break on any shore of time is only the broken expression, in such a tide of love as this the peace of God flows secure.

And how shall we find any peace at all if we do not forget ourselves, and how shall we learn to forget ourselves if we are not taught of God? "Now," says the Apostle, "this peace of God which passeth understanding, the peace of perfect knowledge, the peace of perfect power, the peace of perfect reconciliation, the peace of perfect surrender, this shall guard your hearts and minds through our Lord Jesus Christ."

V

The word translated "guard" is really "garrison," a word rich in the suggestion of indwelling strength. Our souls are to become fortresses possessed and held of God; and whatever assails us is to be beaten back helpless before His power. Ignorance challenges a spirit, so garrisoned, to surrender. "Lay down your arms," it says, "ye children of time, cradled in mystery and borne on toward strange destinies, you do not know the secret of the dust upon which you stand, or the stars which shine down upon you, or the currents of life which pulse through you, or the wills which urge you on. What peace can you know?" And the

reinforced spirit makes answer, "I do not care; my Father knows and His knowledge is peace enough for me; my steps are guided of Him and the unfolding days are the revelation of His thought for me."

Then helplessness comes up and challenges it. "Surrender," say such voices as these, "to distrust and fear. You are not strong enough for even the common tasks of life; how shall you meet the high and the eternal?" And the reinforced soul makes answer, "I am strong in the strength of God; I am reinforced in His might; a viewless strength drawn from the timeless and the changeless are my confidence."

Then from within the more subtle forces make their appeal, the divisive qualities of life: divided wills, competitive desires—and truly these are most tenacious foes of all—but the reinforced spirit may turn to even such as these and answer, "I am not alone in my strife; God's will has become my peace and in His strength I am strong." Selfishness beats at the gates of the soul, so garrisoned; but above it the love of God spreads out His banner with His sign of the Cross upon it, and in that sign we are safe.

"The peace of God shall garrison your soul through our Lord Jesus Christ." What is the connecting link between the peace of God and the troubled souls of men and women? Truly the incarnate Christ. He has bridged the gulf between the human and the divine. How do we know that God guides us? Through the assurance of His Son: "I am the way and the truth and the light." How do we know that God keeps us? Through His testimony, for He tells us that not even

a sparrow falls to the ground unnoted by an infinite love. How do we know that we are the object of a divine concern? Because He has told us that God so loved the world as to give—. How shall we make all this real in our own lives? Most truly in that discipleship of Jesus Christ which is faith and surrender and love and self-discovery and the assurance of dear-bought salvation.

Those who have found such a door as this as a way of nearness to the Divine, though they be much beset, without and within, do possess the peace of God which passeth understanding, and become living sources from which some widening and transforming tide of peace is always flowing out to give to all our fellowships a new quality and establish us, as it were, in the everlasting arms.

PRAYER

O Thou, in Whose will is our peace, grant unto us, Thy children, much beset within by the strife of our own divided souls, and besieged without by the assault of unfriendly circumstances, the gift of Thy peace. May we find deliverance from our ignorance as we commit all our ways to Thy wisdom; may Thy undergirding strength bear us up in all our weakness, Thy loving goodness give serenity and strength to our halting purposes, and Thy love subdue our selfishness till our fretting concern for ourselves is lost in holy affection for others. And may Thy pardon quiet our consciences as Thy mercy is mindful of our troubled estate. We ask it all in His name who is Thy Peace drawn near to save and bless us—even Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

GEORGE BREWER

Dr. Brewer was born in Kingston, Ontario. On coming to the United States in his youth he became naturalized, and was educated at Wooster University, McCormick, and Princeton Theological Seminaries, being graduated from the latter in 1905. In that year he was ordained to the Presbyterian ministry in Columbus, Ohio. From the begining he has occupied prominent pulpits, including the First Presbyterian Churches of Columbus and Coshocton, Ohio, and of Duluth, Minnesota. The Grosse Pointe Presbyterian Church, situated in the finest residential section of Detroit, has called him recently. The notable thing in his ministry is the earnestness, frankness, and sincere courage with which he prosecutes his work. His ministry in Detroit has been positive and practical; and his preaching has always been informing, forceful, and inspiring, putting the gospel of Jesus to work amid the intricate and troublesome problems of human life. This sermon, which is an example of the preaching at Grosse Pointe, lifts Christ up before men, and does not fail to point out the requirements of life and service which must be met and fulfilled by a Christian church. There is great hope for our nation when men catch such a vision and preach such a gospel. There is one remedy for the distress of men and institutions; it is the greater patriotism of love, which Jesus taught. May God raise up a Patriotic Church, such as this sermon calls for.

PREACH CHRIST—Dr. Jowett expressed the holy ambition of all true ministers when he said, "I have but one passion, the absorbingly arduous, yet glorious work of proclaiming the gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." But how shall we proclaim that gospel? Dr. Patton says, "It is no easy task to bring high truths home to moving picture minds in a day when so many have transferred their worship from the Infinite to the indefinite." Dr. Dods said before his death, "I do not envy those who have to fight the battle of Christianity in the Twentieth Century." Then after a moment he added, "Yes, perhaps I do; but it will be a stiff fight." It is a stiff fight, and a fight that in itself reveals the world's need of the gospel. Therefore, I firmly believe that the hour has come when preachers must consign to the flames their learned lectures based on a text, but shrewdly concealed in a mixture of German rationalism, superficial criticism, unscriptural theology, and impractical ethics; and prepare once more to preach Christ and Him crucified for a lost world. We must proclaim Him with such conviction and soul appeal that every hearer will know that loyalty to the Deity of Christ is the foundation of our religion; that progress has not undermined the necessity of Calvary, nor the power of the cross; and that Christ risen from the tomb is conqueror of death, the redeemer of life, and Lord of all.—GEORGE BREWER.

II

THE PATRIOTIC CHURCH

GEORGE BREWER, D.D.
Grosse Pointe Presbyterian Church

A world-wide war has shaken our modern civilization to its very foundation. The whole world today is rocking under the pressure of political, social, economic, and religious upheavals that threaten all nations, and all people. Germany, shaken to the depths, must find a new foundation; Russia is still in chaos; England, France, Greece, and Italy have been stirred even to symptoms of anarchy, while the ground swell of Europe's upheaval is alarmingly perceptible as it now breaks in erratic theories and false standards against our shores, threatening to engulf us in a new form of disaster. The war in Europe was between races, and the enemy was evident. The war in America is between classes, and the enemy is often disguised. They look more like tramps than soldiers, and fight under the disguised names of "Hyphenated Americans"; "Communists"; "Anarchists"; "Socialists"; "I. W. W." soap-box orators, who talk and will not work; "Radical Reformers," drunk with wild theories; "Frenzied Fanatics," who must be heard at any cost; and Unnaturalized Foreigners, who like our money but

not our flag. These are the self-appointed leaders who are now waging the new warfare for the so-called "awakened workers of the world," under the battle-cry: "The rights of the working man"; "The greed of the upper classes"; "The war between capital and labor." Here is a vicious war with a real outcome; but what will that outcome be?

Macaulay, the historian, with his far-sighted vision, tells us the outcome. He said, years ago—"As for America, I appeal to the twentieth century. Either some Cæsar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth, with this difference—that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged Rome came from without her borders, while your Huns and Vandals will be engendered within your own country, and by your own institutions." Was Macaulay right? That question must now be answered by all loyal Americans. The new war is on—the Huns and the Vandals are here, fighting to break down our laws and institutions, to disrupt our industry, and substitute the red flag for the Stars and Stripes. So, as citizens, we face an alarming problem—as Christians, we face an eternal responsibility; and I, for one, believe that this is the crucial hour for the patriotic Christian Church to step right into the changing order and do what Christ wants done in all our national, industrial, and social relationships of life.

But what can the Church do in the changing order of our day? Dr. Faunce says: "The Church cannot

pose as an authority in sociology or economics. It cannot rush in where experts fear to tread. It cannot settle the problems of government taxation, industrial insurance, profit-sharing, and minimum wage—neither can it specify the exact number of hours for work, or the exact amount of wages to be paid—nor can it outline a rigid program upon which the world must run. But it can speak with authority and power on the fundamental Christian principles underlying all these things. It can proclaim, without fear or favor, the sacred rights of the individual as related to our industrial situation. The Christian Church must be utterly and eternally opposed to all forms of labor that degrade, degenerate, or exploit the laborer." Labor cannot always be agreeable—work is not always play; but it should never be a curse. Some men must repair our streets, dig our sewers, carry our garbage, mine our coal, breathe the hot air of the steel plants, and feed the blazing fires of our engines and furnaces. Some women must clean our floors, wash our clothes, and do the daily drudgery in a thousand ways. No mass-meeting orator can reverse the degree, " In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread."

But the Church claims that in all labor there must be mutual consideration, honesty, and justice; that the work of the home should not crush out the soul of womanhood; nor the toil of the factory crush out the aspiration of manhood; that in a Christian land women and children should not be sacrificed to any alleged necessities of trade; that no unsanitary tenements are justified for the enrichment of landlords; that no occu-

pational disease should go without remedy; and that all toil without just compensation, or a just share in results, is unchristian, and therefore cannot be tolerated in a Christian land. In other words, no church has a right to preach about golden streets in heaven, if it has no concern for the streets and alleys of the city; and no church has a right to picture the joys of the sweet bye-and-bye that is not making an honest effort to bring some of the joys of heaven into the industrial situation that we face here and now.

And even more, the Church must proclaim the true democracy that should rule all men in all relationships of life. But what do we mean by democracy? We are all familiar with that patriotic phrase, "All men are created free and equal." Yet we all know that men are not created equal in a literal sense. They are not equal in mind, body, or in heart. Men are no more equal in character, ability, or service than they are alike in their looks, the color of their eyes, or the amount of hair upon their heads. Men are not born equal in the literal sense, and yet in spite of all differences, we believe in a real equality that underlies our modern conception of true democracy. But what is that real equality? An authority answers, "Society is not a sandpile, made up of individual atoms, but a living organism, in which all individuals are equally necessary to the full, complete, and harmonious working of this grand and living whole which we call society."

Let us look at this truth through an illustration: the tiny muscle that compresses the tear-duct in my eye is in no sense equal to the large muscle that moves my

arm. One is big; the other is small. One has the capacity to exert great strength; the other possesses only the minimum of strength. And yet, viewed in the body as a whole, both muscles are equal in that they are necessary to the full and harmonious working of the whole body, for if the tiny muscle in my eye fails to function it may rob me of my sight, and thus paralyze the working of my arm and the usefulness of my body. In the same sense, we all believe in the fundamental principle of human equality. All men are not equal in character, gifts, and powers; but they are all equal in the sense that every man is a necessary part of the whole, and as such he should have the equal opportunity for the highest individual development, not for himself alone, but for the full and harmonious working of the whole of which he is a part.

In a true democracy every member must feel and measure up to the responsibility for the life of the whole body; and, if he does not, then he robs democracy of its real meaning, and causes trouble all along the line. A little finger may not seem to be the all-important member of the body, but if bruised and bleeding and left to fester in pain, it will soon send pain and poison throughout the whole system until it reaches the heart. In the true democracy no member of the living whole should be allowed to suffer; no group of members of the living whole should be allowed to rule, whether it is a class of radicals or revolutionists, autocrats in labor, capital or in industry. Russia is an example of the neglected member; Germany is an example of class rule. But in the true democracy

there should be no class rule; there should be no suffering members, for "we are all members of one body." And this is the democracy which the Church must proclaim for all relationships of life, because it is the only social order that can be built upon the fundamental teachings of Jesus Christ.

And again the Christian Church must proclaim the far-reaching principle of industrial co-operation. In the World War we all saw the difference between the materialistic and Christian conception of life. The materialists said that war is a law of the eternal order. Christianity said that brotherhood is the law of the eternal order. The materialists said that competition is the fundamental law of life. Christianity said that co-operation is the fundamental law of life. Christianity has never approved of war or material competition as the fundamental basis of industrial life. We believe that all honest enterprise is a partnership in which all men should work with a common purpose, mutual responsibility, and with co-operating share in all results. This is the spirit of co-operation that was so magnificently manifest in the allied forces of the world. All classes of all nations, fired by a common cause, were co-operating to win the war.

If all classes could organize so effectively for the work of destruction in war, could they not now also co-operate in the work of construction in peace? Certainly they can; and just as certainly the time has come when all business men of this country must think in the terms of the laboring man, and all laboring men must think in the terms of the business man, and all

try to see things from the other's viewpoint. The time has come when co-operation and not conflict must be the watchword of all. This is the principle that is being advocated by some of our leading business men of today. Listen to these words of such a man, as published in a recent leaflet called "Representation in Industry." He says:

"The soundest industrial policy is that which has constantly in mind the welfare of employees as well as the making of profits, and which, when human considerations demand it, subordinates profits to welfare. The day has passed when the conception of industry as chiefly a revenue-producing process can be maintained. To cling to such conceptions is only to arouse antagonism and to court trouble. In the light of the present, every thoughtful man must concede that the purpose of industry is quite as much the advancement of social well-being as the accumulation of wealth."

In other words, when hard-headed business men, and experienced industrial leaders proclaim such co-operation, it tells us that the new day has already dawned. Competitive antagonism leads to anarchy. Loyal co-operation leads to industrial prosperity and peace; and this is the principle that the Church must proclaim with all her power.

And, above all, the patriotic Church must proclaim the redeeming religion of Jesus Christ; the religion that was born at Bethlehem's manger when the shining star guided the worshiping Wise Men to the birth-place of the world's Redeemer; the religion that grew in power until it burst forth as the Sun of Righteousness,

the Light of the World; the religion that beamed upon the vine-clad hills of Judæa, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth until it aroused all sleeping Asia, as she lay dreaming of her heathen gods, to the life that is life indeed; the religion that shone with sufficient light and glory upon the cold materialistic formalism of northern Europe to start the conflagration that ended in the Reformation; the religion that lighted the path of the Pilgrims to this new world, our Christian America; the religion that has conquered barbarism, violence, and superstition; that has transformed the savage into the saint, the brute into the brother; that has made the lame to walk, the blind to see, the heart to hope, and the world to rise into newness of life wherever it has been proclaimed; the religion that has regenerated, comforted, and sustained human hearts which have been responsive to its redeeming power; the religion that manifests itself in a burning passion for righteousness, a flaming fire for justice, and a regenerating power sufficient to save the world from its selfishness and sin; the religion that is still the foundation for all modern civilization and upon which empires, democracies, and republics may still safely build and achieve for the welfare of man and the glory of God. Yes, religion, the Christian religion, the Christ-inspired Christian religion is the only safe and abiding foundation for world-wide civilization. Therefore, the patriotic Church must proclaim the redeeming religion of Jesus Christ.

This is the conviction of world leaders. After the war Lloyd George said, "Now it is either Christ or

chaos; either the Kingdom of God or world revolution." Henry Watterson says, "The paramount question underlying democracy is the religion of Jesus Christ. Eliminate Christ and you leave the world to eternal war." Earl Haig says, "The Church of Christ is the world's only social hope, and the sole promise of world peace." Lord Bryce says, "Nothing but the power of Christianity can secure the world's peace." George W. Perkins, director of the International Harvester Company, said, "Christianity in the hearts of men is the need of the hour. I believe that the application of true Christianity is what the world is striving for; and I believe it will achieve it." One of our own labor leaders says, "This world must come back to Christ—the greatest revolutionary that history has known, a revolutionary who carries out the revolution not by strikes, mobs, and lawless slaughter, but by dying Himself upon a cross."

Richard H. Edmons, editor, of Baltimore, says, "Above all else this country needs a nation-wide revival of old-fashioned prayer-meeting religion." Robert Lansing says, "The world can only meet this grave situation by renewing and strengthening its spiritual life, by turning away from materialism, and implanting in men's souls those great fundamental principles which Christ taught, and which He manifested in His life on earth." Roger Babson, the world-famed statistician, says, "The need of the hour is more religion everywhere, from the halls of Congress to the factories, mines, and forests. It is one thing to talk about plans and policies; but without a religious mo-

tive they are like a watch without a mainspring, or a body without the breath of life. And, remember, the Christian Church is the only organization in existence that supplies the motive equal to the situation." Bernard Shaw says, "Why not give Christianity a trial? After contemplating the world of human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no other way out of the world's misery, but the way of doing Christ's will."

Then why not give Christianity a trial and put Christ to the test in our modern problems?

This is exactly what the president of a large manufacturing business in Cleveland is doing in his business. This Christian man was first an employee, then an employment manager, and is now president of the concern. A short time ago their company sold a bill of goods to a customer in another town in Ohio. The buyer made an unwarranted claim for adjustment, which the company refused to allow. Correspondence followed. The customer was insistent; the company was unyielding, and the situation was deadlocked.

A few weeks later the president went to that city to call upon his customer. Entering the office, he said, "I'm Clark from Cleveland, and I dropped in to straighten out that account." "Oh, yes," said the customer, "and what adjustment do you propose?" "Just this," said Clark, "I'm a Christian man, and I do not propose or intend to do anything that is not in accord with the principles of Christ. My proposition is for you to pay me just what you know to be due on a Christian basis." "That's a blooming funny thing," said the surprised customer. "I've never heard of

such an idea in business." "And business is so much the loser," said Clark. "It's the way I run my business, and I'm making no exception in your case." "But you have me in a corner," came back the customer. "How did you know that I was a church member?" "I didn't," said Clark. Then the business man pushed a button on his desk. A clerk appeared, and the business man said, "Bring me a check for the full amount of that Cleveland bill," and in a moment Clark had his money. This same man Clark addressed a group of manufacturers in the East. He told his theory of Christian co-operation in business. A great shoe manufacturer came back at him this way: "I've done all the things you suggest. I'm a Christian man. But in spite of this, labor has gotten into my factory and have put over a strike. My whole plant is tied up. Your theory may sound all right, but it doesn't work in practice. What can I do?"

"Let me answer your question by asking one," said Clark. "How many of your employees are your personal friends? How many of their homes have you visited this past year?" "None," was the answer. "Yet these labor agitators that you complain about have been in these homes. They know the needs and the thoughts of your employees. They sympathize with them. They tell them that they will secure their demands. The result is the strike. Suppose you gave up just one night a month to calling on your employees where they live. Suppose each of your foremen and superintendents did the same. Do you think it would make any difference? Christ visited the homes of pub-

licans and poor folks, obtained their viewpoint, and the result is that His teaching is the marvel of history." "I'm answered," replied the manufacturer. This same man, Clark, was speaking before a great audience of working people with radical socialistic tendencies, and he said, "The fruits of victory for which our boys fought in the World War will not be made secure, nor the world be safe for democracy, until every workman is honest with his employer, and every employer is honest with his men and altogether loyal to the principles of Jesus Christ."

These are wise words; they bring us back to Christ's solution for our individual, social, national, and international problems; they open up a line of patriotic service possible for all. I wonder how many of you realize that you will never have a greater opportunity for heroic service than in answering the challenge of the hour. Our country calls for men, Christ-converted, spirit-filled, conviction-moved, patriotic men, who will step out into the arena of our modern conflict and help to usher in the new era of individual integrity, social purity, industrial honesty, national democracy, and world-wide peace.

"God give us men, men who when the tempest gathers,
Grasp the standard of their fathers
In the thickest of the fight.
Let the cowards cringe and falter,
Men who strike for home and altar
Can defend the right.
True to truth, though alone and lonely,
Tender as the brave are, only
Give us men! O, God, give us men!

"God give us men! A time like this demands
Great hearts, strong minds, true faith, and willing hands.
Men whom the lust of money does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office can not buy;
Men who possess opinion and a will;
Men who have honor, men who will not lie.
Strong men, Christ crowned, who live above the fog,
In public duties, and in serving God."

PRAYER

Lord, bless Thy Church at work in the perplexities of the changing order, and face to face with the world-wide tasks. Fill Thy Church this day with the spirit and power of Christ. Make every minister a champion of righteousness and an ambassador of consolation. Draw all Christians into a closer and more vital relationship with the Crucified, that they may serve Him in truer devotion. Increase our faith, enlarge our hope, strengthen our convictions, broaden our sympathies, and help us all to enter more sacrificially into Christ's passion for the redemption of the world. We ask it in His name. Amen.

CHESTER B. EMERSON

Dr. Emerson was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, on July 28, 1882, from a family rich in its religious faith, its patriotic traditions, its Puritan conscience, and its lofty conception of social duty. He was graduated from Bowdoin College in 1904 and from Union Theological Seminary in 1909, receiving highest honors from both institutions. Upon his graduation from Union, he was ordained to the ministry in the Congregational Church at Brunswick, Maine, and was appointed to the First Parish Church of Saco, Maine, where he remained in happy fellowship and honored ministry for four years. In 1913 he was called to the North Woodward Congregational Church in Detroit, and has enjoyed through these years a ministry of increasing helpfulness and popularity. A very deep spiritual ideal and purpose has taken hold of his marked gifts of thought and speech, and has wrought out a marvelously constructed message, which receives today as through the years the closest attention and highest praise of people from all walks of life. Dr. Emerson speaks with authority not only in his own city and among his own people but in many sections of the country, for he is being used constantly in the great cities as guest speaker at outstanding religious and community gatherings. The strongest point in his preaching lies in its versatility, expressing himself as mystic, poet, scholar, and student of social life. Three of the colleges of America, Bowdoin, Hampton Institute, and Chicago Theological Seminary have placed him upon their boards of management; and the Michigan Conference of the Congregational Church made him Moderator for 1925.

MY PHILOSOPHY—I believe that man is a child of God who is a loving Father and who has created the world for man's mental and spiritual maturing.

I believe that the world rightly understood and used makes for happiness and is the best possible world.

I believe that character is the meaning of life and that this life is perfectly adapted to making it.

I believe that man's misery in himself, his misuse of the world and his misconception of life are due to the fact that he has missed the way.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life of God for men, and that in Him and through Him men can find God.

I believe He wills to share and can share these gifts with every human soul who will come asking.

I believe enough men will come to Him ultimately to make the Kingdom of God a reality in the earth, which is the sway of His love in the counsel and conduct of men, singly and collectively.

"To win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness but the righteousness which is of God by faith," is the difficult but certain ascent of life here and hereafter.

To teach men these truths and help them live in their light is good reason and adequate reward for the Christian ministry.—CHESTER B. EMERSON.

III

REDEEMING THE TIME

CHESTER B. EMERSON, D.D.
North Woodward Congregational Church

"See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil."—EPH. 5:15-16.

What a world we are living in! So full of truth waiting a wise man's question, so rich in treasures for a strong man's capture, so vocal to sensitive ears, so beautiful to seeing eyes, so friendly to sympathetic souls. And yet so fearful to the ignorant, so stingy to the incompetent, so silent to the vociferous, so ugly to the unappreciative, so hard to the hateful.

It is pretty much the same world as it has ever been. George Eliot was thinking that when she wrote in the beginning of *Romola*, "The great river courses which have shaped the lives of men have hardly changed; and those other streams, the life currents that ebb and flow in human hearts, pulsate to the same great needs, the same great loves and terrors. We are impressed with the broad sameness of the human lot which never alters in the main headings of its history—hunger and labor. seed time and harvest, love and death."

We are confronted today by the same mysteries as our fathers. The Sphinx might as well sit at the head

of Wall Street as at the foot of the Pyramids. There she broods over the silences of the dead; here she would listen to the uproar of the living. The sands of the desert are no more desolate than the streets of the money market. There the thinking is too slow, here it is too quick. There is little enlightenment in either place. Both desert and market miss the answer to the riddle. The old answer was man. The new answer is man also—the Spirit of man.

The fable of the Sphinx is that she swallowed those who could not guess her riddles. Life always swallows those who are too busy with things to discover the spirit that informs things. Experience was meant to teach us wisdom. It is amazing how little of it we have. Life, like school, is frequented by dullards. In spite of the crowd of witnesses who surround us we go on making the same old blunders—lust, intemperance, avarice, suspicion, envy, malice, bigotry, hatred, warfare. We continue to glorify our physical achievements. The strong man is he who has beaten the world into a temporary submission, captured its citadels of treasure and defied all competitors. The great nation is the one that fears no one, sometimes not even God, and can and does take its own part, clutching for a century or two the chaff which the winds of history drive away.

But the great facts and forces of life abide. Physical discovery and mechanical enterprise do not alter them. They are eternal. Life today is complex, clothed in great luxury and fired by great ambition. Yet beneath all still are the same old ugly human pas-

sions of anger, deceit, disobedience, jealousy, avarice, fear, hate. The one great peril still is moral death. The one great need is salvation.

We go to the Book to learn those truths that most vitally concern God and humanity. "Here we find the most about what we are and what determines our destiny." Man in the Bible is not a seeker of gain and pleasure, though the record is there of these by-interests which he followed to his moral undoing. He is a traveller out of the East toward the West, along the road from birth to death, possessed by "longings that take hold of eternity," seeking a city that hath foundations. "Man is here a sinner, but finding forgiveness; a mourner, but receiving comfort; a sojourner, but enabled to find a home eternal in the heavens." That is God's truth which transcends time and space, which ignores all the barriers of race and circumstance among men.

Emerson says, "See how the deep, divine thought reduces centuries and millenniums and makes itself present through all ages. Before the revelations of the soul, time, space, and nature shrink away—she has no dates, nor rights, nor persons, nor specialties, nor men. With each divine impulse her mind rends the thin rind of the visible and finite and comes out into eternity."

And that revelation which is of yesterday and today is that God, the Eternal, whose Godhead is redeeming love, is moving through time and circumstance to win man's spirit to His spirit. Through all the fleeting years which are but shadow flecks upon His sunshine

His spirit works upon the hearts of men to save them from their worst to His best. To repent of our sins, our disobedience, our indifference, to hear and obey the voice of God speaking in the Book, in history and in our consciences is the beginning of life that has real meaning and permanence.

"We are all blind until we see
That in the human plan
Nothing is worth the making if
It does not make the man.

"Why build these cities glorious
If man unbuilded goes?
In vain we build the world, unless
The builder also grows."

(Edwin Markham.)

"See that ye walk circumspectly, not as foolish, but as wise; redeeming the time because the days are evil."

As we look out upon our world, the first thing we notice is a lack of restraint. Men and women seem to know no authority but their own captious wills. And the power behind these thrones of our selfhoods seems to be nothing more than undisciplined impulse. Led by psychology that is curiously like the adolescence which is its main study, they are searching for the obstacles which prevent the free exercise of desire not to recognize their validity, but to destroy their restraint.

One might also say that one of our chief troubles today is lost complexes. True enough, we do need to free men from morbid introspections and laming inhibitions that they may proceed through life like the

free and joyous sons of God they were created to be. But there are complexes in our lives compounded of negatives that are of God. There are inhibitions dictated by the command of a self-conscious decency. Good proof of this may be found in the Ten Commandments, whose prohibitions would be as improving today in a society which practised them as in that far-off yesterday. And if some prefer an enabling commandment instead, they may well accept that great challenge of the New Testament—(I Cor. 6: 19) " Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Of course, it is evident that the real lack back of the unlicensed conduct of the times is the loss of our traditional recognition of the authority of God. We no longer hear God speak to us in thunderous tones of judgment. In our efforts to lighten the burdens of the Calvinistic Creed we have almost lifted the yoke of man's responsibility to any higher God than himself. God has become a " weakly diffused " Being with generous impulses. Omar Kháyyám, being the philosopher of the multitude, as Dr. Luccock has suggested, pretty well defines their Deity when he says:

" Some there are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making—Pish!
He's a good fellow, and 'twill all be well."

Have we forgotten the awe of the prophets toward

Jehovah? Do we remember the austere love of Christ for Our Father? Did Jesus not say to His disciples when they went forth to preach His Gospel, "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." We read by the hard sayings of the Book too quickly. There is such a thing as the wrath of God—not wrath in the likeness of our swift anger and abdicated reasonableness, but an implacable opposition to all that is evil in us. There is such a thing as judgment. Thistle seeds flower in thistles, not roses. Evil deeds grow evil being, and evil being must be burned clean in the fires of retribution.

All this is prefatory to saying we need to recover a consciousness of sin among men—that their lusts are more than vulgarities, their licenses are more than carelessness; that there is a moral standard to which men must conform, set by the Eternal God in the laws of nature and revealed in human terms in Jesus of Nazareth; that by His character are we judged, and only by His mercy are we redeemed. And as we come to understand this, we shall help each other back to a habit of prayer so lost these days because so many self-constituted leaders have assured us of its unreality. We shall feel a need of help and will ask for it. We shall want a power not of ourselves to uphold us as we fight the forces of evil that come on with hue and cry unto us; we shall crave a peace that the confused world can neither give nor take away.

We shall cease trying to be supermen, captors of

heaven and earth, appreciating no values that are not personal and prudential, recognizing no authority but our own wills. When we have stopped cheering Nietzche, the pedagogue of our present-day motives lecturing us on the will to power, we may hear him in a bad moment lamenting the loss of his right to pray.

"Never more wilt thou pray, never more worship, never more repose in boundless trust—thou renouncest the privilege of standing before an ultimate wisdom, an ultimate power, an ultimate mercy, and unharnessing thy thoughts—thou hast no constant watcher and friend for thy seven solitudes, thou livest without gazing upon a mountain that hath snow on its head and fire at its heart; there is now no redeemer for thee, no one to promise a better life; there is no more reason in that which happens, no love in that which shall happen to thee; *thy heart hath now no resting-place, where it needeth only to find, not to seek;* thou refusest any ultimate peace, thou desirest the eternal recurrence of war and peace—man of thy self-denial, wilt thou deny thyself all this? Whence wilt thou gain the strength?"

I think we shall grow quiet and become teachable, tractable, with a new wonder in our eyes, the wonder of understanding, and a new joy in our hearts, the joy of forgiveness, and, kneeling beside Jesus, our Saviour, pray the fond old prayer—

"Our Father, which art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
In earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

The second thing we notice as we look out upon our world is its mad *acquisitiveness.* We are possessed with a mania for collecting things, from easy chairs to Rolls-Royces, if we are individuals, from crude oil to peoples, if we are nations. Our mental resources are pretty much exhausted by answering the question, "What shall we eat; what shall we drink; and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Our business is mercenary, our education predatory, our politics prudential, our religion competitive, and lately combative.

And what have we for it all? Grudge labor which takes no joy in God's creative gift; profit-making which keeps a man's soul under lock and key with his treasures, suspicion which marks the average face as detective and not declarative, envy which sets everybody in a mad scramble of imitation, hatred which separates neighbor from neighbor, nation from nation. Yea, verily,—

"The world is too much with us—
Late and soon, getting and spending we lay waste
our powers,—
We have given away our hearts—a sordid boon."

But they need not be sordid! They may be joyous, full of the lilt of life, finding the world the best possible of all worlds, a glorious place to live in and work

in, and peopled by a wonderful crowd of folk, all eager to help and be helped, love and be loved, share and receive share. There is enough food and to spare, enough room, enough work, enough time for play and worship as well. And, above all, a great goal to seek, the Kingdom of God that is large enough to be inclusive of all the gifts that the nations can bring to it, and demanding enough to be incomplete without goodwill and effort of *every* man.

Here, again, back of the fact is the reason for it. *The world has lost its sense of immortality.* "We go this way but once, let us enjoy it," says the wisdom of the world. "Our years may be few, let us get ours while we can. Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die and we'll be a long time dead." But how pathetically the Epicurean seeks surcease from his sorrow, as he picks the breaking string of his lute and looks on the face of his dead beloved. How pitifully he cries for power when the forces of life bruise and break the body. There comes a time when he cannot laugh or sing or dance. He faces the great event of death and his whole being shrinks from being blotted out. Then he wants to hear the dear old words, "In my Father's house are many homes. If it were not the truth, I would have told you. So let not your heart be troubled."

We must win back our assurance of immortality,—that whatever in us loves as Christ loved or is capable of being loved by such an One as He, cannot die. Nothing can kill it. It is beyond the reach of disease or decay. It is hid with Him in God.

"Immortal Love, within whose righteous will is always peace
O pity us storm-tossed on waves of ill,
Let passion cease.
Come down in power within our hearts to reign
For we are weak and struggle has been vain."

"The days are gone when far and wide our wills
Drove us astray;
And now we fain would climb the arduous hill
That narrow way,
Which leads through mist and rocks to Thine abode
Toiling for man and Thee, Almighty God.

"So may we, far away, when evening falls
On life and love,
Arrive at last the holy, happy halls
With Thee above,
Wounded, yet healed, sin-laden, yet forgiven
And sure that goodness is our only Heaven."

If the world today is sadly in need of redemption, how shall it receive it? There is no redemption without a Redeemer. It was true for us who call Christ Lord and Master. It is true for those who have not yet found their freedom in Him. He came to us through the mediation of others. Shall we not also mediate His grace? Is not the redemption of our times our task? Sin is too often regarded as an illusion, an error of mortal mind. But it was real to Jesus. Otherwise there is no meaning to the incarnation or the atonement. The evil of the world is the result of ignorance or wilfulness. The incarnation is for one, the atonement for the other. One was to demonstrate righteousness; the other was to redeem unrighteous-

ness. The work of redemption is our heritage from Christ. " See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time because the days are evil."

" Say not the days are evil, who's to blame?
And fold the arms and acquiesce. Cry shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name."

Paul, who gives us our text, felt the responsibility of his world's redemption. You will remember that in his epistle to the Colossians (1: 24) he confesses: " I, Paul, am made a minister, who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ." Anything lacking in the afflictions of Christ? Is not Calvary enough? No! There must be incarnate calvaries everywhere. Without Paul, without Peter, Italy would not have set the crucifix at every crossroad. Without us, the world today will seek for salvation and seek in vain. If Jesus was God's conduit of redeeming grace then are we His continuing channels.

Paul rejoiced in his sufferings because he felt Christ was in him, still reconciling the world to God. And that is true of every genuine disciple of Christ. If Christ is in us, then are we seeking the goals of Christ. He answered the messenger of John the Baptist, " The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Christ asks proof of our discipleship. Can we answer, " The lost are found, the sick are healed, the poor are fed and

clothed and spiritually led, the rich are become stewards of the earth's bounty, the exploiters are exposed, the vicious are restrained, the burdened are relieved, the sinful are recovered, the young and old and weak are protected, the acceptable year of the Lord is being preached to the ends of the earth"? It is to this task that we must consecrate ourselves with that same abandon which has marked the life of every disciple who has wrought righteousness in his generation.

Have you read that wonderful page from the diary of Jonathan Edwards—"I have this day solemnly renewed my covenant and dedication. I have seen God and have given myself and all that I am and have to God, so that I am not in any respect my own. I can challenge no right to myself, to this understanding, this will, these affections. I have no right to this body, this tongue, these hands, these feet; no right to these senses. I have given every power to God, so that for the future I will challenge no right for myself." That is a magnificent self-surrender. It is the complete dedication of a soul to God. For a day in which individual salvation was the supreme concern, it is the perfect expression. But something more is needed for our day with its double emphasis—its other emphasis upon the social obligations of Christian discipleship.

"Lord, what wouldst Thou have me *do* as well as *be*," we ask today.

The answer comes quickly, "Seek and save the lost."

Who are the lost?

Anyone who for any reason whatsoever is not growing with and for the Christ.

Where are the lost?

Everywhere—in counting-room and shop, in office and in laboratory, in scholar's study and at workman's bench, in alley and in avenue—wherever life is in dissonance with the divine life; wherever a man's character is contrary to that of Christ, wherever humanity is seeking goals not found in the Kingdom of God or living by motives subversive to a reign of love in the earth.

The world is waiting! We have the Word of Christ in Book and Church. Have we His love in our hearts? Are we equal to our enterprise? "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time because the days are evil."

PRAYER

Here in our time and place, O God, our lives are set. Nor would we dream of days that seem heroic for the Christian faith, either in the past when great leaders preached a redeeming Lord across the world, nor in some mystical future when men may find conditions once again calling for Christian courage.

Show us the high adventure that awaits us in our day. Reveal to us how great is the enterprise of Christ's Kingdom in the tangled affairs of our world. Make heroes of us all, rising with courage to the challenge of evil, putting on Thine armor to withstand the forces that war against the virtue and happiness of our race. Bless us with the increase of a noble manhood, which is the Christian's personal reward, and with that visible enlargement of Thy Kingdom among men, which is the goal of Thy church. Amen.

JOHN WELLINGTON HOAG

Dr. Hoag was born in Canada, but has spent most of his life in the United States. Lansing, Michigan, was his boyhood home; and Kalamazoo College is his Alma Mater, being graduated there in 1900. His theological training was received at the Divinity School of Chicago University. Opening his ministry in the First Baptist Church of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, he has had a most happy relationship to some of the fine Baptist churches of our country, including the First Baptist Church of Trenton, New Jersey, and the Calvary Baptist Church of New Haven, Connecticut. Woodward Avenue Baptist Church, where Dr. Hoag is now located, is one of the great preaching centers of America. The church membership is approximately thirty-five hundred, and the constituency of the church is exceedingly large. It is an evangelistic center, with one of the largest Sunday night congregations in the city; and the sane, challenging, and uplifting sermons of this genial prophet of God has made this possible. Ten years of such conspicuous service in the heart of Detroit is a record upon which we all look with admiration and respect. Many affirm that Dr. Hoag and his associate, Samuel Meyers, form the best evangelistic team now in the active pastorate.

CALLING MEN TO CHRIST—Some one has said that "the best way to edify a saint is to convert a sinner." Surely a Church in which men are really taken and held for the Lord has an atmosphere in which souls must grow. Our place in a Church should mean a recognition of our responsibility for calling men into the ways of the Lord, to seize them and hold them as captives of the divine grace. Men are called to be saved—and to be saviors. What can the Master say if we fail of our very reason for being saved, and we come home at the end of our season of harvesting without any sheaves for the heavenly garner? Jesus was constantly calling. He preached to the vast multitude; he talked with the individual; he went into the temple and synagogue; he went out to the streets, the markets, the lanes calling to men to come after him. "The Master is come and calleth for thee." If you are not a soul-winner, Christ can make you one. "Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men." We are "stewards of the mysteries of God." "Take my voice and let me speak ever only for my King."

—JOHN WELLINGTON HOAG.

IV

FUTURE MONARCHS

JOHN WELLINGTON HOAG, D.D.
Woodward Avenue Baptist Church

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."
—MATT. 5:5.

We face here one of the hard sayings of Jesus. If He had promised dominion to the resourceful, He would have expressed more exactly our ideal. Or, if He had changed the latter part of the beatitude, and had promised the meek certain inner and mystical rewards, we might have assented more readily. Or, if He had said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall have heaven"—that gracious world where the unselfish and holy have their home—then indeed the promise would seem assured of fulfillment. But to offer to the meek the rewards of earth where bluster and brute strength count for so much and where civilization is carried forward on the end of a gun, is to make an assertion that risks the charge of absurdity.

Still there must be a truth lurking in this beatitude, for Jesus spoke no empty words. Every prophecy He gave utterance to has revealed evident signs of coming true, and there is no probability that this brief benediction will prove any exception. Christ was not only practical, fitting Himself and His message to the im-

mediate needs of His time, but He was also an idealist, speaking for the far-off centuries. Far more than the old artists who produced their masterpieces not so much for the small clan or tribe among which they lived, but more especially for the delight of the remote nations, so Jesus spoke for the future of the world, however long it might continue. The promises of God and the hopes of His children are not easily driven out of history: when they are banished they have a way of returning: when they are crucified they rise again. The text speaks of an heir, not a possessor: a kingdom assured in the future, though it may be after many days. It is by the long view that we see the apostles of the gentler kingdom coming into their own.

The earth even now is making rapid strides toward a government swayed by this patient aristocracy. The human scene today is that of vast millions trying to marshal themselves under the lead of gentle methods. Nations everywhere disclaim champing the war bit. Arms are not now considered a symbol of the highest civilization. The "pusher" was never more apologized for than today. "Violence has its day, but it is not a long day." We believe as never before that a peace congress is more civilized than a war camp and that fraternity is preferable to barbarism. The business man makes it to the advantage of his rival to go with him rather than against him: to maintain the market rather than break it. If the terrific animals have died to make room for birds of song: if the lark makes her nest in the blossoming grasses where serpents once hissed: if sweet apples fall where once bit-

ter fruit covered the September ground: then will the human race, yet, steal away from despots, monarchs, landed lords, to be governed by universal tenderness. The scene is that of a war-torn world coming home.

The word translated by the English term "meek" demands a moment's attention. In the Greek tongue meekness implied "a peaceful and gentlemanly bearing, a tendency to avoid violence and a desire to seek the good and peace of all the community." Meekness was considered a necessary characteristic of true culture. Plato used the term to express the softening of a character or an age; Xenophon to describe music as it might die away to its quietest and sweetest tones; St. Francis to express the calmness of a heart which had conquered passion. In its best days, meekness stood for all that was gentle, not only in the mind, but also in nature. It stood for nations becoming more refined; stood for grapes sweetening in the autumn; stood for an orator whose bitter words were changing into sympathy and pathos. It was free from every element of rudeness. It pulsated with consideration and thoughtfulness. It sought to "melt rather than crush; to draw rather than drive; to woo rather than compel." Jesus tells us that ultimately there will pass under the authority of such a spirit the many principalities and powers of our world.

Consider the might of the meek. Meekness was never other than chivalrous and was never other than ready to champion the cause of the weak. Jesus was not all submission. He carried whip-cords and at times uttered blistering words, yet we claim that He was

truly meek. There are occasions when meekness has a flash in the eye, a majesty of moral indignation, a terror of righteous anger. A very gentle preacher was seen, one day, hastening along the streets of his city "with a face like fury, grinding his teeth in anger." He had heard of a man who was plotting the ruin of a beautiful girl he knew. "When since the world began has love ever maintained a quiet poise in the presence of the assailant of the loved one?" It is not meekness to condone wrongdoing. True meekness has a different reason for its calmness than a prudent regard for self-interest. It is a counterfeit of the grace of meekness to claim merit in commanding one's temper when there is no temper to command. The slave is not meek when he calls some tyrannical master a "blessed benefactor" in order to keep his head on his shoulders. The politician is not meek when he lays aside his conscientious scruples, in order to stand in with the organization. The merchant is not meek when he allows the man on the other side of the counter to say anything to him, if only he can get his trade. All these things are done from shrewdness. If these people were truly meek they would cling to certain treasures of the soul, though driven thereby into battle.

Jesus never fought for Himself. His anger never had its roots in selfishness. When men abused Him, He was unruffled. When they heaped the greatest indignities on His person, He was mute. When they lied about Him, He "answered not a word." When they crucified Him, "no trace of anger darkened His face." His loving heart kept on praying, "Forgive them, for

they know not what they do." But when He saw pious men " devouring widow's houses " and " for a pretense making long prayers " the manly indignation of His soul flashed forth like lightning. When He saw the place of prayer turned into a " den of thieves," He drove the swarm of mercenary hypocrites into the street. Anger is noble just in proportion to its unselfishness. Indignation is righteous when it is disinterested. Only the man who in loving obedience to truth has laid aside every prejudice and renounced his own personal desires, has any right to go forth as God's warrior.

Meekness begins its universal rulership by a victory in the personal realm. " Changed men will make changed conditions." The soul is called first to the conquest of itself. To rule others we must know how to rule ourselves. There is to be such a complete victory over passion and pride and vindictiveness that we are left to the triumph of principles and the enthronement of truth. One of the perpetual delusions of our human race is that possession of externals makes for kingship. We too often measure influence according to one's ownership of the glittering things that lie outside of him. There have never been so many interesting things to take hold of, to own, to acquire, to be ambitious after, to pile up, to enjoy, as now. But man succeeds only in proportion as he succeeds with himself. " Dost thou wish to possess the earth? " asked St. Augustine once: " Beware, lest the earth possess thee." Our wealth is to be counted in the things of the heart and our success by the triumphs of the spirit.

You and I, as human beings, have nothing so important to attend to as the kingdom that lies within us. It is our business to work on that, to pile up wealth in the interior vault that no eye sees save God's alone. It is our business, in season and out, to strive to conquer our spirit. "A man that rules his own soul is greater than he who takes a city." That is a task possible of accomplishing. We make poor work attempting to change conditions. The old world is adamantine, flint-like, hard as a rock. We change it very little, no matter how we strive and struggle. But we can change ourselves. We can change our ambitions, our scale of value, our goal, our way of looking at life, our aspirations, our conduct. The supreme social service is to socialize the social unit, the individual, and then the way is prepared for the coming of every good thing.

Religion is resignation and trust before it is accomplishment. How general the impression that power is measured by exertion; that we are effective because of what we do; so that when we are not in exertion of some kind, we are not accomplishing anything. But entrance into the kingdom of grace is through the gateway of our power to bear and not our power to achieve. "We estimate men according to the amount of pressure which they exert; Christ estimates Himself according to the amount of pressure which He can sustain." Jesus stood and took what was given Him: bore what was laid upon Him. "He was oppressed and he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth." At the end of His days He said, "The prince of this world hath nothing in me." "No place in Me at which My

strength is not matched to his assaults." Who is there of us who does not feel that it is an achievement worthy of considerable praise to so much as even stand one's ground under the tremendous attacks of evil. It is commonly not difficult for men to be active, or even bravely so. Action arouses activity. Enterprise thrills our powers of enterprise. But where is the inspiration in standing still under a load that is almost heavier than one can sustain? To bear evil and wrong, to forgive, to suffer no resentment under injury, to be gentle when pride clamors for redress, to restrain envy, to bear defeat with a firm and peaceful mind, not to be vexed or fretted by cares, losses or petty injuries, to abide in serenity of spirit when trouble and disappointment come—these are conquests worthy the best of us. "You begin to reign the moment you begin to suffer well."

Meekness is a modest word, humble, supplicating, and it puts us where we must consent to stand—in debt to God. It fastens the accent not on what the worshipper does for himself, but on what God has done for him, and is prepared to do. Have not our best hours—the hours when we make some notable recovery of ourselves, or make some new advance into the life of faith—been hours not of striving or of wrestling, but hours when something came to us; happened within us, not by our own will, but by the will of another? A fine spirit was let loose within us; descended from above. It was never intended that our faith should be based on anything we can do. That would be to keep us anxious, worried, doubtful. Faith should relieve life

of strain, not add thereto. Men must stop thinking about themselves and begin thinking out of themselves towards the infinite peace of God. There is a need of the human soul for an element of rest and peace, for an end of all worries and harassments, for a sense that somehow the battle is not yet all to fight, but has been fought and won and that it is ours, partly at least, to sit down under our fig-tree, none making us afraid. Every grace and hope of the soul depends not upon our poor hold of God, but upon His hold of us; not upon what we are, but upon what He is. We earn nothing from God; we receive all things. It is the genius of meekness to bring us into just this attitude to God.

The way in which the warm air commences in April and May in all gentleness, to intrude and insinuate itself, moving with so velvety a tread, and with a voice so muffled to a whisper that we see what it is doing without at all realizing that it is doing it, seems a kind of parable, teaching the lesson of the text. The cold and frozen obstinacy of winter is not forced out. The ice that a little while before had fettered the rivers and rendered the soil barren and unfeeling is not pounded into the beauteous plasticity of swollen rivers and freshly flowing brooks. A bit of sunbeam pleads with the frost crystal and simply by the warmth of its touch subdues it into a tear.

In this we may read the method of future monarchs. Spiritual results are wrought by enticement. Man's will is not amenable to compulsion. You can compel one to do what he does not want to do, but you cannot

compel one to will what he is not disposed to will. Between Christ and those who came near enough to Him to be brought within the tenderness of His thought and life there was no friction. There could be none. He never attempted to crowd people to the doing of what they were not in a mood to do. He took care not to come where He was not wanted: did not enter without being invited. He never evinces a desire to have people conform their behavior to the requirements He imposed because they were His requirements. It was His supreme aim to work in men the subduing of their wills by the coming of a spiritual summer.

God has not so much brightened the world to its redemption as warmed it to its redemption so that wherever the gospel has gone, a wave of spiritual verdure has followed in its train, hearts have been touched and in the mellowed atmosphere of it all, the native obstinacy of men has begun a little to soften toward God's holy and loving will. Our inclination is to seek to improve the world by chastising it, to check manifestations of depravity by sharp invectives, but it is to be doubted if society at large, or individuals have been led to ennobled ways of living by this method. Flowers are blasted by tornadoes, not nurtured by them. Salvation, whether of men or of society, is a matter of the incoming of a more genial climate, in which there shall be the softening of our nature; a matter of the diffusion of a redeeming atmosphere. It is by the wealth of our affection that we are to make our richest contribution to the world and to be the means of extending to the hearts of men the abounding

sweetness that gained entrance into the world in the person of our loving Redeemer.

The hope of the ultimate victory of meekness is to be seen in its vast store of patience. The modern scientific way of writing human history has a theological and ethical advantage—it brings us a lesson in the patience of God and in the durability of the human ideals with which He has entrusted His children. To fix one's imagination upon the stretches of time which elapsed between the arrival of humanity and the appearance of anything which could be called civilization —it seems to tell us never to be impatient again, not though the best things seem to remove themselves like the horizon toward which we advance. All the delays over which we fret seem tiny compared with the stretches of time which it has taken to build even the rough outline of a civilized world. They had long to wait in the Old Testament days before their King came to them. They had long to wait after Christianity had started upon its great adventure, before they saw results commensurate with the struggle and the cost. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he has set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." The meek have the gift of patience: they know how to sow their seed and bide their time. Some day they shall put in their sickles and reap, because their harvest is come.

Our text gives to Charles Rann Kennedy the theme for his one-act drama, "The Terrible Meek." The *dramatis personæ* are three—a Captain, a Sergeant and a Woman. As the plot unravels, the Woman is seen

to wear the Eastern costume; the Sergeant is a Roman Soldier; the Captain is a Roman Centurion; on the top of the little hill three crosses are seen to stand. The woman bewails the victim, for he is her son and he has done nothing but speak words of truth and love. Suddenly conviction creeps through the Captain's soul, and when the woman moans "My son! My son is dead," he answers her,

"This broken thing up here, your son, I tell you, woman, this son of yours, disfigured, shamed, spat upon, has built a kingdom this day that can never die. The living glory of him rules it. It will take a new kind of soldier to serve in his kingdom. A new kind of duty. A newer courage, more like a woman's. It changes everything. . . . The earth is his and he made it. He and his brothers have been moulding and making it through the long ages; they are the only ones who ever really did possess it, not the proud, not the idle, not the wealthy, not the vaunting empires of the world. Something has happened up here on this hill today to shake all our kingdoms of blood and fear to the dust. . . . The meek, the terrible meek, the fierce agonizing meek, are about to enter into their inheritance. . . .

"I can see the end of war in this: some day. . . .

"I can see the joy of women and little children.

"I can see cities and great spaces of land full of happiness.

"I can see love shining in every face.

"There shall be no more sin, no pain. . . .

"No loss, no death. . . .

"Only life, only God. . . .

"And the kingdom of the Son."

Meekness is indeed terrible. Slowly, steadily, irresistibly it runs its tidal course, overwhelming one after another the little sand-barriers we draw across it. There is but one thing for us to do;—follow the gleam till love is triumphant and the kingdoms of selfishness and spite are broken like a potter's vessel.

PRAYER

O Lord, Thou who knowest the end from the beginning, make us patient in the working out of thy counsels. Grant that we may never lose faith in the ultimate victory of thy power over everything that worketh destruction. When we look back upon our days we learn how the night was so often better than the day. We see that our tears were foolish and our doubts were phantoms. We remember how many times when the yoke was upon us and we dreaded it, it became an easy yoke, and a yoke in which lay our strength. We remember how often we sought to overleap barriers and to choose paths for ourselves, and murmured at the restraint which hedged us in; and yet looking back, we see that the wisdom of thine overruling providence, and thy plans for us, have been full of light. Since thou hast so wisely guided us hitherto, we pray that thou still should'st lead us on. We do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for us. We pray that we may not feel with any storm which comes that it is the last of sunshine. May we imitate the birds that nestle in the trees until the voice of God in thunder has passed and the sun comes back, and then sing again. Help us to learn from the flowers that though they are beaten down by the storm, still, when the rain ceases, they are lifted up again fresher and more glorious than ever. We pray that with this faith we may face all that awaits us, walking in thy sight, surrounded by thy presence and power, and realizing "if thou be for us, who can be against us?" Amen.

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

There are few men in the Church today who possess the historical and theological background of Dr. Hough. The stream of his thinking is crowded with significant events and strategic lives, making his discourses scholarly and inspiring. There is an irresistible lure in every message. His sermons remind one of the compositions of Liszt, combining the invaluable element of completeness with brilliancy, dignity and dramatic force. As an author of religious books he ranks with the best; and as college preacher there is no superior in America. This past year he acted as chapel preacher at Harvard; and he gave the Fernley Lectures in England this summer, one of the highest honors to be accorded an American preacher. For some years he has been considered America's representative preacher in England, preaching to appreciative audiences in London City Temple and in Carr's Lane, Birmingham. It was five years ago that Dr. Hough came to Central Methodist Church in Detroit after several years of notable service first as teacher in and later as President of Northwestern University. Central Church is the mother Church of Michigan Methodism; and, while it has a great tradition, it can be said truthfully that never has its life been so virile and influential as now. This fact is due in large part to the wise ministry of Dr. Hough and his assistants whom he has so carefully selected through the years. In this man of extraordinary preaching ability, we have also an example of unusual fidelity to pastoral activities and responsibilities, all of which go to make up a remarkably fine ministry.

THE MIND OF THE PREACHER—The making of the preacher's mind is the fashioning of the instrument by which he is to do his work among men. It must be a mind all dripping with human heartiness and so it must be fed by constant and sympathetic human contacts. It must be a mind wise with the knowledge of the fashion in which men and races have made the experiment of living and so it must be enriched by a constant and brooding study of the whole human adventure. It must be a mind saturated with moral passion and so it must know the strain and stress of personal struggle and all the tale of moral battle and of moral victory in the world. It must be a mind glowing with the sense of beauty and so it must find its way into all the tale of the fashion in which sheer lovliness has made a place for itself in the life of man. It must be a mind radiant with the sense of the presence and potency of God in human life and so it must know its own hours of silent and creative communion with the Unseen Friend. It must find its supreme inspiration in the potency of the personality of Jesus and so it must know the meaning of fellowship with the living Christ. All this is sure to seem too high for any of us. But for less than this we do not dare to aspire.—Lynn Harold Hough.

V

THE HEEL OF ACHILLES

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH, TH.D., D.D.
Central Methodist Episcopal Church

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
—I COR. 10:12.

Among those famous stories which the lovely land of Greece has given to the world, the tale of Achilles has a place all its own in the imagination of every bright-eyed lad who has lived over those fierce and tremendous struggles which still come back to us through the noblest speech ever fashioned by the mind of man. And the story of how Thetis, the mother of Achilles, dipped the baby form into the river Styx in order that it might be invulnerable has a curious power to capture the mind. What a dream this was of a warrior who could never be reached by any hostile weapon. But the spot where Thetis held the young Achilles by the heel as she submerged his body into the river was untoched by its powerful waters, and it was in the heel that at last Achilles was fatally wounded by Paris when his mighty days were at an end. The heel of Achilles has become the symbol of that one vulnerable point where a great life may be broken. And it comes to our minds very vividly as we repeat the stern

and challenging words of Paul, " Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

I

Every individual has some spot in his life where he is least capable of making resistance, least able to meet the shock of hostility, least able to withstand the allurements of temptation, most likely to go down in utter and bitter defeat. Every life has its most vulnerable point. Every man has the heel of Achilles. It is just in relation to this point of weakness that the suffering of the world reaches one of its bitterly poignant aspects of experience. The life seems so strong and fearless and victorious. But somewhere is that spot where all the lordly strength is likely to become incapable weakness. And too often the mere possibility is changed to tragic actuality. The weapon of the foe has found the heel of Achilles, and while the life goes on there is an unspeakably bitter sense of failure within. Memory burns with the ineffaceable bitterness of the hours which would so gladly be cast into the darkness of a perpetual forgetfulness. Life would have a great and triumphant joy but for that vulnerable spot, that disintegrating failure which puts its poison into the brightest hour.

The most terrible aspect of the experience of the Greek warrior was precisely in the fact that fate itself followed him. There was nothing he could do. There was no escape. And sometimes we have this same feeling of a remorseless destiny which makes us incapable of resisting just where resistance would lift life

from defeat into victory. We feel as if it is useless to strive and impossible to conquer. But the very genius of Christianity is a contradiction of this fatal pessimism. There is no evasion or hesitation about the Christian religion. It meets squarely the ugliest and most brutal facts. But it comes not with a message of despair, but with a message of hope. It reminds us that it is all too easy to break faith with our ideals, and even with our principles. It shows us without hesitation that the hour of thoughtless confidence is the very hour when defeat lies in waiting. It reminds us that when pride and boastful assurance capture our thoughts, tragic failure is nearer than we think. It never ignores the heel of Achilles. But, on the other hand, it never admits that failure is necessary. And if failure has come, it never leaves us in despair. There is a way from weakness into strength. There is a way from defeat into victory. There is a fashion in which the most vulnerable spot may be made impervious to the darts of the foe. It is in just this sense that Christianity is a gospel. In a unique fashion it unites moral realism with infinite hope. It enables a man to be perfectly honest and yet to find a gleaming star shining in the darkest night.

II

Great institutions are being built up around us all the while. They are the pride of our complex and highly organized civilization. And in a sense each institution is a vast super-person with a life and will of its own, a tremendous and vital organism. It is true

of an institution as of an individual that it needs to guard itself against the tragedy of the heel of Achilles. A great university may be tempted to think more of the brilliant and skilful publicity which calls forth large donations than of the patient experiment in the laboratory and the patient research in the study and library which really add to the knowledge and power of the world. It may be tempted to think more of producing keen and efficient men of business than of cherishing its sacred traditions of knowledge and taste. It may surrender the humanities to practical efficiency instead of suffusing practical efficiency with all the grace and strength of the humanities.

And so it may cease really to be a university at all. Its practical ambition may be the heel of Achilles which proves fatally vulnerable. A great corporation may think of its material product and ignore that human product which is the constant result of its methods and its standards. And in the long run such an institution always fails, not only in ideals, but also in relation to its material products. With all its far-flung power and energy the heel of Achilles has proved its undoing at last. The greatest friend of any institution is the man who, before the day of disaster comes, reveals to that institution its most vulnerable spot.

III

The Christian Church has a place all its own among the commanding institutions of the world. In age, in dignity, and in the august quality of the sanctions which it represents, as well as in its age-long influence

for cleansing the ideals and uplifting the standards of men, the Church is the loftiest institution which has made its influence felt in the life of mankind. It is also a sort of super-person whose vast proportions dominate many a century. And the Church, too, must beware of the heel of Achilles. There is an ever-recurring temptation of loyal churchmen, a temptation which returns with a deep and alluring appeal in all sorts of conditions and in all sorts of places. And this temptation takes the form of leading men to think more of the dominance of the church than of its vital authority of the kingdom of God. To be sure, at some golden moments the contention of the Church is one with the contention with the kingdom of God. And enthusiastic churchmen always try to persuade themselves that in fighting the battles of the Church they are fighting the battles of the kingdom. But the moment we begin to study the history of the Church in the world we see that this is by no means always the case. Indeed, all too often just the opposite situation has existed. And so, again and again, the churchman has ceased to be a Christian at the very moment when he was spending everything in loyalty to the Church. The ages when the Church was willing to surrender the very sanctions for which Jesus stood in the battle for world-wide power tell the whole story.

But it is not simply an old story. When the Church divides into varied groups and each group regards its own group advantage as of more importance than the spread of the spirit of Jesus in the world, then the Christian religion is indeed wounded in the house of its

friends. There is no more subtle test of the real quality of our Christian character than that which comes when the interests of the kingdom of God run athwart our denominational advantage. It is very easy for the self-conscious ecclesiastic to forget the love which is the central thing in the Christian faith. So the fatal dart reaches the heel of Achilles. There is no more splendid achievement than that of actually enthroning Jesus Christ in the Christian Church.

IV

The nation is one of the vast and mighty organisms of the world. It, too, has in a sense a life and a mind and a will of its own. It, too, is a sort of super-person. And it, too, must be guarded against the tragedy of the heel of Achilles. It is a wonderful thing to have a nation to love and serve and into which to pour the very riches of our devotion.

And if we really love our nation with deep and understanding devotion, we will develop, out of the very earnestness of our affection, a capacity to discern the dangers which menace and the weaknesses which threaten the land which we love best of all. It is an uncritical loyalty from which a great nation is likely to suffer most. This is the heel of Achilles, the one most vulnerable spot where many a land has been fatally wounded. When the citizens of any land become the victims of a kind of fatty complacency which is incapable of stern and honest self-criticism, the nation has already entered upon the way which leads to folly and failure and disintegration. There is an in-

sight of love which, just because it cares so deeply, discovers faults which would be invisible to less devoted eyes. It is not really true that noble love is blind. In a sense it is true that only love can see. The nation which is too proud to be complacent, too honest to hide its faults under a protective covering of self-deception, too keen of mind to rest in a fool's paradise of self-assurance has achieved a unique quality of greatness. When a nation is incapable of searching self-criticism its friends have cause to mourn. The heel of Achilles is ready for the darts of the foe.

V

The whole civilized world is a vast and mighty organism. Civilization itself has a life and a mind and a will. It, too, is a sort of tremendous super-person. And civilization must beware of the heel of Achilles. The world which we know has one outstanding characteristic. And that is such a mastery of the forces of nature as was never achieved by mankind in any other age. We have enslaved nature and have become lords of such power as causes our very heads to swim and become dizzy. Unparalleled production, unparalleled transportation, and bewildering creative uses of the forces of nature characterize the civilization we call our own.

And the heel of this mighty Achilles lies just in the lack of a development of self-control which matches this vast control of nature. We have grown in knowledge without a corresponding growth in character. We have grown in the capacity to dominate destructive

forces without growing in that quality of character which makes us worthy to be trusted with such terrible instruments of destruction. We are like undisciplined children playing with matches in a powder magazine. The heel of Achilles is all too palpably vulnerable to the darts which may come against it. If this mighty civilization can attain character as well as power, all will be well with the world for a thousand years. And then new vistas of progress will be opening before it.

To be as strong everywhere as he is anywhere is the achievement which every individual should hold before his eyes. The curious tendency of men to think complacently of their strength and to refuse to analyze candidly their weaknesses is the source of an enormous proportion of human failures. And institutions and nations have the same curious characteristics. We "rationalize" (to use the Freudian term) our weaknesses and exhibit the heel of Achilles as an element of peculiar power. So far do we carry this process of deluding ourselves that men and institutions at times appear to be proud of their weaknesses and ashamed of their strength. But this world of illusion receives a rude shock when the fatal arrow finds Achilles' heel.

Of men and institutions, of churches, of nations, and of the whole civilized world, then, it is clearly true that the story of the one vulnerable spot has a tremendous significance. Each one of them needs to hear and to heed the searching words of Paul, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." But there is no fatal necessity about it all. A man may be saved from fatal weakness. An institution may be strong at the

very point where it is most easy for it to be weak. The Church may really enthrone Christ. The nation may become capable of noble and effective self-criticism. The civilized world may attain character as well as power. That is the very meaning of the gospel of Christ. These are the mighty stakes of these astounding days. Danger does not mean inevitable catastrophe. In spite of the heel of Achilles, it is possible to be invulnerable.

PRAYER

Our Father, with wistful desire we long for completeness. We are grateful that we find that completeness in Thee. We desire for knowledge where we are ignorant, for strength where we are weak, for goodness where we are evil. And we are like men who sense the coming of spring after winter as we realize that we can find all these things in Thee. We thank Thee for a salvation which with sure instinct finds the vulnerable point in men, in institutions, in nations, in churches and in civilization itself, and which comes with healing and strength just where these things are needed most. May our weakest spot become our place of strength. In the name of Christ. Amen.

EDGAR DeWITT JONES

The mark of Southern chivalry and the far vision of the Texan plains is stamped upon the life of Dr. Jones. He was born in Hearne, Texas, in 1876. The law profession lured him on in his younger days, and with this goal in mind he studied in the University of Missouri and at Transylvania University, where he was graduated in 1900. One year later he abandoned the study of law for the ministry, and was immediately ordained minister in the Disciples of Christ Church. For fourteen years he was minister at the First Christian Church of Bloomington, Illinois, coming to the Central Christian Church of Detroit in 1920. While at Bloomington, in the midst of an unusual pastorate, Illinois Wesleyan University conferred the degree of D.D. upon him. Scholarly, devotional, brotherly, versatile and original in thought and speech, he has made a deep impression on Detroit, and is in the midst of a happy and fruitful ministry. His published sermons have attracted wide attention, the best volume being published under the title, "When Jesus Wrote on the Ground." The *Detroit News* has taken him on its staff, where he has found a larger mission through articles of social and political conditions at home and abroad. The city owes him a great debt for these and similar contributions to her social and civic life. In this day of emphasis upon the mechanical, even in religion, there is a great need for such preaching as this sermon presents. After all, the outstanding need of human life is to follow Christ.

THE WITCHERY OF PREACHING—There is a word which I like to apply to preaching—the word "witchery." It means "irresistible influence" and "enchantment." Preaching is a high adventure, not for the discovery of new continents or fabulous mines of earthly treasure, but for human beings created in God's image and intended to enjoy the abundant life. No man is worthy the high calling of the ministry unless he have a passion for that calling and is conscious of the witchery of preaching. As long as the minister of Jesus Christ so regards his ministry and the preaching of the word his "opening of the Scriptures" is almost certain to be impressive, informative, inspiring, and what is most desirable, converting.

I offer my testimony here, modest though it may be. My ministry is my life. From the day I decided to abandon my dream as a member of the legal profession until this present hour, the ministry has been the biggest, most alluring, most challenging of life's objectives. Every Lord's Day has been to me a high day; every sermon a spiritual adventure; every man, woman, and little child either actually or potentially a comrade in Jesus Christ. I have never attained unto my ideal as a minister. It eludes me; but I still pursue.—EDGAR DEWITT JONES.

VI

IMITATION OF CHRIST

EDGAR DEWITT JONES, D.D.
Central Christian Church (Disciples)

"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." —LUKE 23:34.

"And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep."—ACTS 7:59-60.

"At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me. May it not be laid to their account."—II TIM. 4:16.

One of the smallest of the world's famous books is *The Imitation of Christ,* by Thomas á Kempis. It can be read in less than two hours, and slowly at that. In the opinion of some critics, this little work is ranked second to the Bible. It was written by a monk about the middle of the fifteenth century, and is renowned for its devotional and spiritual power. For nearly five hundred years this little book has held its unique place. It is a series of eloquent meditations in making one's life like that of Christ on earth. Hence the title, *The Imitation of Christ.*

In this connection it is interesting to note that Peter, in his first epistle, the second chapter, writes, "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow in his steps." Likewise Paul, in Ephesians, exhorts his hearers to be "imitators of Christ." With these injunctions in mind, together with the cele-

brated little volume by á Kempis, it may be profitable to group together for study three New Testament incidents, which indicate how impressively the early Christians were affected by the example of Jesus. The three passages selected are grouped about the Christ, the martyr Stephen, and the apostle Paul. They are like three links in a golden chain. Moreover, they present three scenes full of pathos and sacrifice sublime.

I

Scene the first is Calvary and the Crucifixion. Artists have endeavored to paint this scene; but they have only partially succeeded. It beggars description. The long vigil is over. The agony in Gethsemane, the betrayal by the traitor's kiss, the cruel trials, the beating and the buffeting of the prisoner at the hands of the soldiers, the mocking and the spitting in the face—all are past, and the beginning of the end is at hand. Jesus is nailed to the cross and lifted high "amid that wild and savage crew." With Him, one on either side, two robbers are crucified. It is the hour of the enemies' triumph; the power of darkness reigns. The crowd surges about the foot of the central cross, and they jeer and taunt the Nazarene. With hoarse voices they cry, "Come down from the cross, if thou art the Son of God." Others cry with cruel sarcasm, "He saved others, himself he cannot save. Let him come down from the cross and we will believe on him." Thus the enemies of Christ had their inning, and in hate they taunted Him, hanging helpless on the wooden cross-

beam. And oh, marvelous record—He answered; but not in bitterness or in wrath. Seven times He spoke from the cross; and His first saying is the greatest of all. He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

From whatsoever angle one surveys this saying, it is altogether wonderful. It is so far above our poor human prejudices that there is a wideness in the words like the wideness in the sea. It is a prayer—a prayer so full of mercy, so tender, that it touches the very depths of our emotions. Any attempt to circumscribe or limit this great utterance of Jesus is a tragic blunder. I heard a distinguished minister make the attempt, before a great audience on a notable occasion, and the result was painful and regrettable. He attempted to show that when Jesus prayed this prayer, He did not include Judas nor the priests or scribes. According to this distinguished minister, these men did know what they were doing; and from this interpretation he hastened to argue a modern application to the World War and the enemies of democracy. Alas! that one should tamper with this great utterance in order to clinch a point or cite a moral. Did not Paul write that if those who put Jesus to death had known what they were doing they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory? When men sin they never know fully what they do. When we sin we do not know that we strike at the very heart of God, and that the blow hits home. Who of us ever sees sin as Jesus saw it from the cross? Yea, verily, this prayer of Jesus for His enemies is the climax of love and mercy. It is doubtful if any who

thus heard Him speak these words could ever forget it. We have at least one example of the effect of this prayer made upon the life of an early follower of Jesus Christ.

II

Again, the scene is a martyrdom, and in all probability the environing is Calvary again, since that was Jerusalem's place of execution. Another young man was looking death in the face and about to die as a witness for truth—a young man prominent in the Jerusalem Church, one of the seven deacons selected to serve that mother Church of Christ. His character was of singular grace and beauty. Having been charged with blasphemy against Moses and against God, he was put to trial before the Jewish Council. The defense he made before that august assembly is a marvel of sacred eloquence. In it he bore testimony of the promise made by the prophets and showed that Jesus, whom they had crucified, was the fulfiller of prophecy and the long-promised Messiah. The young man was brought to the place of execution. They carefully prepared for the stoning, which was the sentence against him. They took off their outer garments and laid them at the feet of a young rabbi named Saul. Then they hurled the stones upon Stephen; and with sickening thud they crashed upon him. The young man kneeled down and, almost with dying breath, prayed, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and then cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Here we have an echo of the voice of Jesus from the cross. The Saviour said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." His disciple, remembering the words of his Lord, in like manner prayed, "Lay not this sin to their charge." There is a similarity and a difference in the prayers. Jesus prays to God; Stephen prays to Jesus. Jesus says of His executioners that they know not what they do. Stephen, who knew not their minds, prayed for their forgiveness; and herein he followed the example of his Lord in the all-important matter of a forgiving spirit. Here, within a few years, perhaps months, the example of Jesus on the cross is emulated by one of His disciples. Between the stoning of Stephen and his prayer for the pardon of his executioners, and the death of Jesus with His words so full of tenderness and love, there is a close and intimate relationship. Stephen learned the forgiveness of his enemies in the school of Jesus Christ. They gnashed on him with their teeth; they rushed on him savagely. He had not a single friend to stand by him. At his martyrdom there was no one to parallel the little group at the foot of the cross whose hearts were full of love and sympathy for Jesus. Even so Stephen prayed the great prayer, and so he found fellowship in the spirit with his Lord.

Was Stephen present at the crucifixion? Did he see the Christ hanging there? Did he hear the words, "Father, forgive"? We do not know. But if he was not present, he knew what occurred; and the story of Jesus' dying words inspired him to die in the same wonderful way.

III

Scene the third is the prison cell in the city of Rome. The cell is small and lighted by a single window. By the rays of light that straggle through that window a man is seen writing at a table. He is prematurely aged. His back bears the marks of many scourgings. His face is weather-beaten; but his eyes are aflame with a great light. The one time Saul of Tarsus, now the apostle Paul, is the prisoner bending over the parchment. He is come up to the end of his eventful career. World traveler, great missionary, scholar and minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. How wonderful is his life! This is the man who had been shipwrecked, lied about, and scorned. This is the man who had spoken to the philosophers in Athens from the famous Mars Hill; the man who had spoken before kings and queens; the man who had addressed mobs in the street at the peril of his life; the man who had written letters to the churches that the world would never let die.

And now this man is writing the last letter, and it is directed to Timothy, his son in the gospel. As he approaches the close he becomes personal. He asks Timothy for the cloak that he left at Troas. His cell is damp; he would have his great coat. He tells him to bring the books, when he comes, especially the parchments. The days are drab. He would read and write and so spend fruitfully the days of imprisonment. Next he refers to the great trial that had come upon him. He speaks of a defense that he made when no one took his part but all forsook him. And then, oh marvelous fact, he offers a prayer for those who

wronged him. He writes, " May it not be laid to their account." Where did Paul learn so great a spirit of forgiveness? From Jesus on the cross? Nay, not directly. He learned it from Stephen, who learned it from Christ. Charles Lamb said that he learned patience from his mother, and that his mother learned patience from Christ.

The memory of the death of Stephen must have ever remained fresh in the mind of Paul. He was consenting to that young man's death; he saw his fair young face shining with a great hope; he saw the executioners rush in upon Stephen, and he beheld the stones they hurled upon his defenseless body; he saw Stephen when he knelt; he heard him when he called upon the Lord, saying, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit "; he heard him when he cried with a loud voice, " Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." That scene was indelibly stamped upon the young rabbi's mind; and years afterwards, at the close of his long and useful life, while awaiting the death sentence in a Roman prison, the dying act of Stephen came freshly to his mind. Writing to Timothy thus, he was enabled to speak of the wrong done him without any thought of revenge or malice, and almost in the identical words of Stephen, he said of those who forsook him, " May it not be laid to their account."

Oh, blessed chain of hallowed influence. First Jesus on the cross remembers His enemies, only to pray, " Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do "; then the young Stephen, as the cruel stones are hurled against him, remembers his Saviour's attitude under similar circumstances, and cries, " Lord, lay not

this sin to their charge "; and finally, the apostle Paul, at the end of his long service as a Christian missionary, recalls an experience of pain and suffering, but remembering the dying words of Stephen, is enabled to pray that those who wronged him may be forgiven. Oh, blessed emulation of the spirit of the Master of us all!

IV

The early disciples were imitators of Him, or better yet, they were " followers," for that is the meaning of the word in the original. Stephen emulated his Lord in dying, although his death was not by crucifixion; Paul followed the example of Stephen, although the precise circumstances were not the same. This is the point to remember when we speak of imitating Christ. It is possible to confuse the transient with the permanent, the incidental with the main course of His teaching. Well it is for us to remember that the letter killeth but the spirit giveth light. Copying Christ is not without its perils. Jesus is usually portrayed by the artists with His hair worn long and parted in the middle, wearing a pointed beard, with His body clad in a long flowing garment and with sandals on His feet. To imitate His dress or any of the customs of His day and the people from which He sprang is a matter of no importance whatsoever. That was the incidental, the transitory. What He wore, what He ate, how or where He slept—these matters are immaterial to us. But to possess His attitude toward God and man, to reproduce His habits of prayer, His sacrificial love, His spirit of

forgiveness, His love for little children, His freedom from prejudice, His sensitive conscience against injustice to the poor, the weak and the humble—in short, to possess His mind—this is the real imitation of the Christ.

What a fascinating study is this—the effect of Jesus' example upon Stephen and the result of Stephen's example upon Paul. What rich food for thought it supplies. Seek ye Jesus' mind, and from that will issue Christ-like deeds. Think Christ's thoughts after Him, and it follows, as day the night, that your feet will find the way of mercy. Seek His mind, and your hands will respond to the manifold ministerings that assuage grief and heal the broken heart. And what an uplift to our souls is the example of others who have sought out the Christ and have given their lives in ennobling and enriching service. Others have discovered the Christ spirit and have applied it. In turn, we take up the quest, discover the Christ, and display to the world the spirit of mercy, forgiveness, kindness and love. For us and for others to become the imitation of Christ comes about through the heart-cleansed lives of those going on before.

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Jesus Christ; who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant, being made into the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

"I cannot put the Presence by, of him, the crucified,
Who moves men's spirits with his love as doth the moon the tide;
Now I see the life he lived, the god-like death he died.

"Again I see upon the cross that great soul-battle fought,
Into the texture of the world the tale of which is wrought
Until it hath become the woof of human deed and thought,—

"And, joining with the cadenced bells that all the morning fill
His cry of agony doth yet my inmost being thrill,
Like some fresh grief from yesterday that tears the heart-strings still.

"I cannot put his presence by, I meet him everywhere;
I meet him in the country town—the busy-market square;
The mansion and the tenement attest his presence there.

"Upon the funneled ships at sea he sets his shining feet;
The distant ends of empire not in vain his name repeat,—
And, like the presence of the rose, he makes the whole world sweet.

"He comes to break the barriers down raised up by barren creeds;
Above the globe from zone to zone, like sunlight he proceeds;
He comes to give the world's starved heart the perfect love it needs,—

"The Christ, whose friends have played him false,
whom dogmas have belied,
Still speaking to the hearts of men—tho' shamed and
crucified,
The Master of the centuries, who will not be
denied!"

PRAYER

O God of infinite compassion, of love ineffable, unto thee all must come. Thou hast shown us the life abundant through thy son, our Saviour. Thou hast revealed through him the way of peace and power and plenty. Yet we are slow to apprehend and hesitant to follow the Prince of Peace. Forgive, Lord, our childish prejudices, our strange and inexcusable hates, our foolish pride and intolerance. By the memory of the cross and the Christ who suffered there, help us to banish all hate from our hearts. Strengthen us, we pray thee, in our purpose to learn forgiveness in the school of Christ. In his dear name. Amen.

ALVIN E. MAGARY

San Francisco was the birthplace of Dr. Magary. His collegiate education was received on the Pacific Coast, together with his training in the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Later, he was granted the M.A. degree from Columbia University and was graduated from Auburn Theological Seminary. His last pastorate before coming to Detroit was at the First Presbyterian Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where with infinite care and determined will be builded his church into the plan and spirit of the great builder. It was in 1924 that Dr. Magary came to the Woodward Avenue Presbyterian Church; and yet in such a short time he has commanded the interest and respect of the religious life of the city. Without attempt at display he has gone to work to lay strong foundations and to build faithfully upon foundations already well laid. Such is the high task of the true minister of Jesus Christ. His book *Character and Happiness* published in 1924 and his editorial writings in the *Detroit Free Press* have given him a wide congregation of loyal friends. With a ministry so well begun there is great promise for the future.

It is not every man that can make the Scripture vivid and real to his congregation, whereby it becomes applicable to modern life; but Dr. Magary can do this invaluable thing. And in the doing of it he is reaching a multitude of people in a positive fashion, binding them to the eternal truths.

THE PARSON—There was a day when the parson was assumed to be the most cultivated man in the community. He was a student, a minister, and a man of God. If any one had called him a mixer or a live wire, he would have been far from flattered.

My ideal of the minister is perhaps old-fashioned. I do not believe that religion can be interpreted to this or any age by men whose chief qualification is a fussy benevolence and whose highest skill is in advertising either themselves or their churches.

More than any other thing, our age needs preachers with prophetic vision. They need not dwell in a world apart; but they must be given time to dwell apart from the world. The man who has an appointment for every hour of the day will not grow into that grace of mind and soul which has always been characteristic of the great ministries.—ALVIN E. MAGARY.

VII

TRAITS OF THE RELIGIOUS SOUL

ALVIN E. MAGARY, D.D.
Woodward Avenue Presbyterian Church

II Cor. 4.

"In this ministry," says Paul, "I never lose heart. I may be harried on every side, yet I am free. I may be perplexed, yet I am never in despair. I am persecuted, but never forsaken. Though I am struck down I know that I cannot be destroyed. The light of God shines within me; the troubles of this life shall give place to enduring peace; and when this temporary tent which I call my body is taken down, I shall have a better home eternal in the heavens."

That is the confession of faith of the religious man. He is not blind to the miseries of human life. He does not deceive himself by glossing over the dark spots of human experience with fugitive and meretricious colors. He looks courageously at the real world with its trials, affliction, and unhappiness; but beyond these things he sees a brightening future. He knows that man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward; yet he believes there is a haven of peace, where the waters are still. He is able to look without flinching at the fact of death because he knows that eternal life is the ultimate portion of mankind.

This chapter suggests some of the traits of the religious soul. It is assumed that religious people are good; but goodness alone is not enough to mark off the man of faith from his unbelieving neighbor. Goodness is by no means confined to those who profess belief in God. So far as human standards are concerned, millions of those who profess no belief fulfill the requirements of goodness. They are benevolent, patriotic, industrious, and honorable; but there must be something more to make the life of faith. A good man is a glorious vindication of nature; but it is the glory of religious faith that its fruit is goodness and something beyond goodness.

One trait of the religious soul, which is clearly manifest on every page of Paul's writings, is the sense of the immediacy of God. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in my heart."

One of the faults of Christian theology is that it habitually has thrust some medium between the soul and God. This medium might be a priest, a ceremony, a creed, a church, or a Bible. That these things are of great value we do not deny. There is a priestly as well as a prophetic function. We believe in the lofty mission of the Church and the value of its observances; we know that the Bible has been the fountain from which millions have drawn comfort and assurance; we believe in the preaching of the word which has kept taut the moral nerve of hosts of men and women; but above all we believe in that sense of God's presence which comes to men and transcends priest or Church

or Bible. When we are alone or in company, when we are busy or idle, at work or at play, at home or abroad, in the quiet house of worship or among the crowds of the street, at prayer or at business, there must be times when we know that the spirit of the divine bears direct and immediate witness of His presence with us.

It is a trait of the religious soul that it hears and recognizes this voice of God for itself. All the noise of the world, with its pursuit of wealth and pleasure, cannot overwhelm the still small voice of the divine. Through all the discord, all man's inhumanity to men, the music of the eternal voice ought never be lost. Amid the darkness and uncertainty of this human pilgrimage the clear light of God's presence need never be quite hidden from us.

When the little boat was tossing perilously on the sea and the frightened disciples were expecting to be engulfed, it was the quiet voice of the Lord which stilled not only the wind and waves but also the fearful tumult of their own hearts. When we feel that He is with us we can find quiet in the midst of confusion and conflict. And if one is to have quiet in this life, he must have it within himself. There are blessed times when by the shore of the sea or among the hills, we do have surcease from the noise of the world; but such hours are rare and only serve as occasional respites from the grinding clamor of our daily life. It is characteristic of the religious soul that, amid the daily clamor, it is enabled to keep its poise.

We live in the midst of distracting commonplaces. The average household's solicitude about the furnace,

its discipline of children, its worries about money, and its anxieties about a hundred trifling things—" what we shall eat and what we shall drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed "—these are the things that wear us into nervous ruin. Man awakes in the morning to the barking of dogs, the rattling of bottles and the clatter of the kitchen. He goes to work amid the rumbling of street cars and the blowing of whistles. All the day long there is the ceaseless ringing of the telephone, the hammering of typewriters, the countless and insistent sounds of the city. So the day goes on, coming to its close at last with the banging of pianos, the raucous voices of the phonograph and the diabolical shrieks of the radio.

Tranquillity is the result of the deep view of life. It comes only to those who have learned to live among the disturbances of the world without being disturbed by them. " Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of men. Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

Our neighbors heckle us with false convictions, paltry ambitions, and censorious criticisms. Even when our intentions toward each other are most amiable, we irritate each other. The nervous strain of mere human contact accumulates, until we burst out angrily and give pain to those we love.

Being human is at times a trying business because it involves constant impingements on the lives of others. It is impossible to live without others, and it is often hard to live with them.

" Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy pres-

ence." We all love the silences of the deep woods or the stretches along the beach where we can walk a few hundred yards away from the crowd and feel that we are alone. Some of us have felt these things; but we can all feel a thing yet greater. We can know the immediate presence of God in the midst of the streets, where the crowds jostle us and life's discords assail our ears.

Thomas Carlyle, while peculiarly sensitive to the discords of life, was a man in whom there was a deep, abiding consciousness of God. His sense of the divine presence is revealed as he meditates on the events of the night before the battle of Dunbar. He thinks of the confusion of the night, of the treasons, of the strategies and ambitions of men; and he writes, "The hoarse sea moans, swinging low and heavy against these whinstone bays; the sea and the tempest are abroad and all else asleep but we—and there is One that rides on the wings of the wind."

There is another aspect of this which touches us just now. The religious soul has no fear concerning the permanency of religion. We live in a time of change and threatened change, of intellectual and moral confusion. Men fear that the foundations are being destroyed and that God is dying out of the hearts of men. A want of trust in the future begets bitterness, hate, and intolerance. Men fight most bitterly for most hopeless causes; and the pious pessimist is always prone to forget that love is the first of Christ's commandments. The religious soul is magnanimous because it is sure that God is both able and willing to

steer His world through the mazes of doubt and failure to ultimate redemption.

Courage is a trait of the religious soul. We are sometimes led to think of Jesus as a mild-spoken philosopher who went about uttering sweet thoughts and being kind to people. We forget that He was the most magnificently brave figure in history. It is when we achieve the consciousness of the divine that fear ceases to trouble us. It is when our hope is not in God that our souls are disquieted within us. "God is our refuge and strength. Therefore we will not fear though the earth be moved and the waters roar and be troubled. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of refuge is our refuge."

The soul that abides in Christ is enriched with the unsearchable riches of God. "All things are for your sakes." In a day when the thoughts of men are turning to material gain, it is good to be reminded that life does not consist in the abundance of the *things* which we possess. It must be a trait of the religious soul that it appraises the various parts of life with competent discrimination. Many of us are deceived as to the relative value of these prizes, rewards, and accomplishments which offer themselves to us. We toil through many a weary year to get what we want, only to dis cover that it was not worth the getting.

It must be a trait of the religious soul that it knows what is worth while. The true member of God's Kingdom is like a merchant seeking goodly pearls. He knows, with the judgment of an expert, what is genuine and what is false. He cannot be deceived with imita-

tion jewels. About the man or woman who has really attained the religious life, there is a practical grasp of the meaning and worth of things. As the training of the artist enables him to see things in correct perspective, so a true religious experience helps to put the parts of life in their right order. "Why spend your money for that which satisfieth not?" asks the prophet. The wasting of skill and strength in the acquiring of things which will never contribute to our happiness is one of the mistakes which a religious view of life will help us avoid.

Insight is a trait of the religious soul. "We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen." The religious man walks not by sight, but by insight, which is another word for faith. He is not prepossessed by the circumference of life. He knows something of what is at the center. As he looks upon the multitude of men, hungry and ragged, like those whom the Master fed, he sees more than a huddle of human bodies, more than a mob of discontented, wrangling, ineffective people. "The fact of Jesus Christ," with its glow of God's own glory, is there, and like the apostle he feels within himself the thrill of kinship with mankind. As we walk not by sight but by insight, so we love not by sight but by insight. If the religious soul is marked by its power to love, it is because faith opens our eyes to things pure and lovely which are not seen save by the discernment of the spirit. "The light of the glorious gospel of Christ" makes humanity glow with a beauty that incites in us a willingness to live and to die in the service of men.

It is a trait of the religious soul that it anticipates the future. It is true that we can dwell over-much on the thought of heavenly bliss. There is much to be done in the life we now live, and too much preoccupation with another life may become a barrier to practical usefulness in the present. Yet, if man is mortal, that fact must never be allowed to fade out of his thinking. In the continuation of his personal confession Paul says, " We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." No life can be complete in which there is not a place for thoughts of heavenly things.

There will always be a suggestion of this heavenly quality in the life that is close to the divine. Richard Watson Gilder, the poet and editor, once wrote in a letter, " While in Washington I passed the Harwood navy residence. If there is a heaven and I get there, it will not take me long to find the Harwood house. Their house has always been heaven to me. I shall never forget that dear Miss Bessie." Who this Miss Bessie may have been that made a poet think of heaven, I do not know; but we have all known women like her.

The earthly tabernacle of this body sometimes seems very frail, and yet its frailty carries promise of something better to come. Here we have no continuing city. We are dwellers in tents, and look for a city which has foundations. One is reminded of that magnificent poem which Shakespeare puts into the part of one of his characters in " The Tempest." A vision of earthly

splendor has been called up for the entertainment of the guests, and as it fades the magician speaks:

> *" Our revels now are ended, these our actors,*
> *As I foretold you, were all spirits, and*
> *Are melted into air, thin air;*
> *And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,*
> *The cloud-capped towers, gorgeous palaces,*
> *The solemn temple, the great globe itself,*
> *Yea, and all which it inherit, shall dissolve*
> *And, like this insubstantial pageant fade,*
> *Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff*
> *As dreams are made on, and our little life*
> *Is rounded with a sleep."*

The transiency of human institutions is made pathetically vivid to us when we visit the homes of our childhood and find the old landmarks gone, the old leaders dead, and all the outer aspects changed. Like an insubstantial pageant the world of one generation fades as the succeeding one comes upon the scene. That is why the heart of man is lifted up as he sings, " They stand, those walls of Zion, all jubilant with song." The mind finds rest in the thought of things which endure.

So the religious soul finds all the security that man can know amid the insubstantialities of life. When mankind reels in wrong, when blood and battle are abroad, when pestilence stalks through the night and arrows of destruction fly about us in the day, the man who truly knows God goes confidently on, unfaltering and unafraid.

" All things are for our sakes," says Paul, " the unsearchable riches of God are ours." It matters not that we are like men who carry treasure in vessels of

sun-baked clay, easily shattered by the accidents of our pilgrimage. Our very weakness is our strength. We are supremely fit to do the work of the Eternal because we are powerless without Him. "Therefore, as we have received mercy, we faint not." The religious soul is confident because it is humble; fearless because it fears God; rich because it is glad to be poor; and happy because, like its Master, it is acquainted with grief.

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. And we know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is destroyed, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

PRAYER

Almighty God, thou friend of man, forgive us if we have not known thy friendship as we should. Forgive us, if in the bewildering hurry of our daily life, we have failed to see thy face as often as thou hast revealed thyself. Open our eyes, O God, to the things unseen by the worldling. So teach us that we may do our work as well as any man, enjoy the pleasures thou vouchsafest us with the heartiness of children, take our place competently in the activities of the world, and keep free for thine occupancy thine own place in our hearts. Grant us tranquillity with peace. Help us to be gentle and yet strong, meek and yet courageous, free and yet obedient. Let us walk with Christ the way of service and lift up our hearts with the faith that sustained him. These things, we pray thee, grant us for his name's sake. Amen.

S. S. MARQUIS

The Scotch-Irish of Sharon, Ohio, have given Dr. Marquis to us. His collegiate training was received at Allegheny College and his theological schooling at General and Cambridge Theological Seminaries, being graduated from the latter in 1893. In the same year he was ordained to the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church. His first parishes were in Massachusetts, after which he ministered in St. Joseph's Church, Detroit, for several years. In 1906 he became Dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral and was the loved leader of that great church for ten years. While at Saint Paul's he became interested in social service, and finally was persuaded to become Head of the Sociological Department of Ford's Automobile Industry. For five years he made an exceedingly close study of every human problem that was produced in that great organization and was eminently successful in that field. But his call was to the ministry and he went back to St. Joseph's for a second pastorate, which was a very happy and fruitful one. Recently he has been called to Christ Church, Bloomfield Hills, where he will not only build a great church but will also develop the Cranbrook School for boys under the direction and control of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Few men have a wider sphere of influence in college halls or civic bodies over our country. A wide intellectual outlook has been added to his social passion and spiritual vision—a rare combination and one that makes him a leader in breaking down intolerance and bigotry. Dr. Marquis ought to write more. His one book, "Henry Ford, An Interpretation," is certainly the best book we have on that subject; and his way of handling it betokens ability which he should not hide.

BREAKING DOWN ECCLESIASTICAL WALLS OF PREJUDICE—The sky of the religious world into which I was born was perpetually overcast by theological clouds. I breathed an atmosphere filled with doctrinal fog. In my youth the chief source of my unhappiness was my religion. I was ordered to believe things I could not believe. I was expected to subscribe to things I could not understand. Much that was taught me seemed to have no relation to every-day, christian living. Against this there flamed up within me the spirit of revolt. I felt instinctively that above the doctrinal fog I breathed, and above the theological clouds which hid the Sun of Righteousness, there was a Light on which one could look without the aid of glasses that had been ecclesiastically colored. Through much mental agony I came finally through experience into the presence of that Light. The urge to tell others of what I had found led me into the ministry. A divided Church fills me with shame and indignation. I belong to one of its fragments because there seems nothing else to do. As I see it, more can be done by working from within than by standing aloof. I long for the fellowship of Christian men from whom I am separated by trivial doctrinal differences. I want to see sectarian walls broken down. The driving motive of my ministry, so far as I am aware of it,—the ideal before me as a preacher—has been to weaken these walls, to break down within men within the reach of my voice their unchristian, ecclesiastical prejudices. I do not believe that christian fellowship is to be approached through some agreement as to faith and orders. But I do believe that a working agreement on faith and orders may be reached through fellowship.

—S. S. MARQUIS.

VIII

COMING GIANTS AND THE ARISTOCRACY OF THE FUTURE

S. S. MARQUIS, D.D.
Christ Church—Bloomfield Hills

"There were giants in the earth in those days."—GEN. 6:4.
"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."
—MATT. 5:5.

I. ARISTOCRACY

Traces of those changes which have taken place in the outward, physical forms of life on this planet are to be found buried in the rocks. Evidences of the development of an inward, spiritual life are to be seen embedded in human language.

Emerson has said that language is "fossil poetry." He means by this, writes Archbishop Trench, that "just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life, the graceful fern or the finely vertebrated lizard, such as now, it may be, have been extinct for thousands of years, are permanently bound up with the stone, and rescued from that perishing which would have otherwise been theirs—so in words are beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and the feeling of past ages, of men long since in their graves, of men whose very names have perished, these, which would so easily have perished too, preserved and made safe forever."

In this word aristocracy we have a fine specimen of linguistic fossil. It is the verbal remains of a beautiful idea. It is but the shell of its former self. Its original meaning has gone out of it. Base ideas have crept into it and made it their abode. It was created to designate a ruling class chosen to be such because of character and ability. It was intended to be taken literally. It meant just what it said,—the rule of the best. But, like many another noble word, it has been emptied of its original meaning and made the vehicle of ideas which are the opposite of those it originally conveyed.

Words, like human beings, have their ups and downs in this world. Some, rising from the level of slang, enter finally the sacred precincts of the inner literary circle. Others of the most cultured and refined origin get into bad company and sink at last into the linguistic slums. This word aristocracy has become a degenerate. Originally intended to designate a ruling class selected on account of character and ability, it came in time to mean a class of people who rested their claim to the right to rule on the accident of birth regardless of inherent qualifications. One downward step more and we find it appropriated by those who have neither birth nor ability, but wealth only. Thus, from a word of the highest rank in meaning, it has fallen to a level where it is used as a synonym for snobbery. But there will ever remain in this word some suggestion of the root whence it was derived. And to some of us this suggestion will be taken as a prophecy of that which is to come. For we believe that the world will come ultimately to the recognition of moral and spiritual leader-

ship. Some day there will rise an aristocracy which shall be such in the best and highest sense of the word.

II. GIANTS

The writer of Genesis, looking backward, says, "There were giants in the earth in those days." Jesus, looking forward, says, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." It is a far cry between these statements, one of history, the other of prophecy, but I have brought them together because they set before us two types of man,—the first and the last. The one a physical type; the other a spiritual. The one a giant in brute force; the other a giant with God-like strength. The one lord of the earth in the beginning; the other the inheritor and master of the earth in the end. The first ruled for an age; the second shall reign through the ages.

There are three forces in man,—brute, intellectual and spiritual. For this reason human history falls, with broad dividing lines, into three ages,—the age of the physical giant, the age of the intellectual giant, and the age of the moral and spiritual giant. The rule of the earth is, has been, and will continue to be, by its giants. The world's giants have been, and will continue to be, the types of their respective ages.

In saying what I have just said I would not be understood as meaning that man has exercised first one of his powers and then another. He has employed them all at all times, but one or another has so far dominated that it has given its character to an age. One age, the physical, has been; one, the intellectual, now is; the

third, the moral and spiritual, is yet to come—for I believe that the meek shall inherit the earth. Because I believe in God, I believe that good will triumph, that Jesus Christ is the second Adam, the first born of a new and spiritual race which its service, rendered in meekness and humility, will become the master and ruler of the earth.

III. THE PHYSICAL GIANT AND THE ARISTOCRARY OF BRAWN

"There were giants in the earth in those days." This is no mere fancy, but a fact. It is not merely the statement of a child's story-book, but the record of history. I do not mean to say that men in the beginning were so much bigger physically than they are now that they deserved to be called giants. What I have in mind is the fact that those of superior physical strength ruled their fellows. Victors in physical encounter, they were feared by others. They became leaders through sheer brute force. They were the aristocrats in that old, savage world order. They were honored, and the stories of their mighty deeds were handed down from generation to generation. They left upon the race in its childhood an impression which even yet has not been entirely outgrown.

In the order of time the physical life in man is first. Of his complex being, the physical is the only part he brings into the world relatively well developed. He is born. He feels the pangs of hunger, but if his life were to depend upon his power of mind he would perish. Of the differences between right and wrong he knows

nothing. His physical life dominates him. And as the physical life dominates man in the hour of his birth, so did it rule the race in its infancy. The highest type of man was the physical—the giants, the Samsons and the Goliaths—the man with the broadest shoulders, the strongest arms, and who towered highest above his fellows.

There may not have been an evolution of man from a lower animal, but there is no denying the fact that there has been an evolution of man from a lower man. It is a fact that man began life on a far lower level in the scale of being than that on which he now stands. Since his first appearance on this earth the changes which have taken place in his physical being, and particularly in his mental and moral life, have been enormous.

If we turn our admiring gaze from the branches of our ancestral tree and begin searching among its roots, we will come eventually upon a man who is little better than his fellow animals. We will find him engaged in a struggle very similar to that of the beasts of the jungle. Compelled to measure his strength with theirs, and with that of his equally savage fellow man, he is forced, as the first step necessary to his existence, to develop himself psysically. And we will also discover that we are living today because that primitive man, down to whom lead the roots of our much-boasted family tree, was a better fighter, fiercer, stronger, and more cruel than those who perished at his hands.

The original ruler of men was a giant,—a man of brute strength, of great physical endurance, the victor

in physical encounters. The first aristocracy was an aristocracy of brawn.

IV. THE INTELLECTUAL GIANT AND THE ARISTOCRACY OF BRAWN

The primitive aristocracy of brawn gradually disappeared. There is an old saying to the effect that each generation grows weaker and wiser. Perhaps that is but another way of saying that brute force is ever being met and overcome by the force of mind. The savage who trusted to his unaided arm went down before his weaker but more ingenious foe armed with the arrow or the sling, as Goliath fell before the shepherd boy David. The giant of brawn bowed before the giant of brain. The physical aristocracy of an early age gave way to the intellectual aristocracy of a later time.

The change from the first to the second age came gradually, indeed, taking the race as a whole, it is still in progress. Brute force has by no means ceased to be a power in the world. War is not a thing of the past. The prospect that it will be done away is growing brighter, however, and we believe that the time is not far distant when the power of the spirit of the beast in man, the lingering influence of the old physical giant, will be broken, and brute force in no form, savage or civilized, will be appealed to in the settlement of the disputes between men.

We are living in the age of the intellectual giant, and we have an intellectual aristocracy of two kinds. First, there lingers an old titled aristocracy in cer-

tain quarters which is the product of mind devoted to the pursuits of war for the purpose of conquest and the enslavement of weaker nations,—an aristocracy of mind, but of mind devoted to the development and use of material force. And then there has appeared more recently an untitled, moneyed aristocracy—the actual ruling aristocracy of this age —which is the product of mind devoted to peaceful vocations.

When the intellectual giant first came on the stage it was but natural that he should give much of his time to the pursuit of war. The brutal methods of the first age,—the ideals, the spirit, and the influence of aristocracy of brawn still lingered. The new giant was forced to meet the old on his own ground and with his own weapons. In the transition period between the old and the new, intelligence was compelled to become the ally of brute force.

But, as centuries went by, the intellectual giant gave an ever increasing share of his time to peaceful pursuits. He began to gather herds. In a crude way he tilled the soil. Human relationships outside the family were recognized. Families grew into tribes, and tribes into nations. More time was given to agriculture, manufacture, commerce, art, science, and literature, and less to war. Instead of fighting for food, men began to barter, buy and sell. It is the same old principle of competition, it is true, but in a higher and more pacific form. The struggle is gradually carried up from the level of brute force to that of the intellectual.

And so it comes to pass that a new type of man comes upon the scene. Another inheritor of the earth, the intellectual giant, arises. A new aristocracy, founded on wealth, begins to take into its hands the reins of the leading governments of the world. This latest aristocracy is a commercial aristocracy—kings of the railroad, barons of coal and oil, lords of money, merchant princes. Such are the rulers and inheritors of the earth in these days. Such are the giants which the same old principle of competition that controlled men back in the jungle is producing in our time. These are the latest product of the old world order which, in one form or another, has obtained from the beginning.

V. THE COMING GIANT AND THE ARISTOCRACY OF THE FUTURE

Are we living in the last age? Is the intellectual giant the highest and final type of man? Is it such an one that creation has been groaning and travailing, through all these geologic and biologic ages, to bring forth? Is a commercial aristocracy the goal of the race? Has evolution consumed so much time, gone to all this fuss and preparation, to bring forth a modern king of finance? Had Whitman a billionaire in mind when he wrote:

"Immense have been the preparations for me,
Faithful and friendly the arms that have helped me.
Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen;
For room for me stars kept aside in their own rings,

They sent influences to look after what was to hold me.
Before I was born out of my mother, generations guided me,
My embryo was never torpid, nothing could overlay it.
For it the nebula cohered to an orb,
The long slow strata piled to rest it on,
Vast vegetables gave it sustenance,
Monstrous sauroids transported in their mouths
And deposited it with care.
All forces have been steadily employed to complete and delight me."

Are we to regard the plutocrat as the final type of man? Is he the crown of all creation and the inheritor of the earth? He is far from that, if we are to believe evolution and revelation, for both declare that "man is not man as yet." There are prognostics of something nobler yet to come. As the giant of brawn bowed before the giant of brain, so will the giant of brain bow in turn before the moral and spiritual giant. Not that men will have less brains in their heads, or less muscles on their bones, but more of the moral law in their hearts.

The meek shall inherit the earth. A new age, with a new type of man, shall come. A new aristocracy will arise. It will laugh at wealth. In that age the millionaire will be an exotic. He will be regarded by the then reigning aristocracy as belonging to an outgrown and lower order of human life. He will continue for a time to have his admirers, just as the physical bully, the belated specimen of the aristocracy of brawn, finds today an admiring following in the lower stratum of

society. You will find in those days some of the expensive toys of the millionaire of the former age. They will be kept in museums, there to be looked upon with wonder, just as the millionaire of today looks upon the spear and coat of mail of the knight of the Middle Ages, or on the finery from the tomb of some ancient Egyptian king,—relics and symbols of the aristocracy which he has supplanted. It will be recalled that in the earlier days of the intellectual age, men gazed in astonishment on the ponderous old iron bedstead of Og, king of Bashan, who was the last of the " remnant of the giants."

The coming age will have a new standard by which to measure men. It will judge them neither by the breadth of their shoulders nor by the wealth they possess. Neither brute force nor wealth will count in the Kingdom of God, but character only. For the coming giant will be like Christ. The rule of the new aristocracy will be what it was meant to be,—the rule of the best.

VI. THE OLD ORDER AND THE NEW

" Blessed are the meek,"—the world has never taken these words seriously. It laughs at those who do. They are ignorant of the ways of life; they are visionary; they are impractical. They are derided,—at best, pitied.

" Blessed are the poor," says Jesus. The world smiles and replies, " Blessed are the rich."

" Blessed are they that mourn." The world answers, " Blessed are the gay and light-hearted."

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness." No,—"Blessed are they that follow after the pleasures of the world."

"Blessed are the merciful." No,—"Blessed are the shrewd and heavy-handed."

"Blessed are the peacemakers." No,—"Blessed are the fighters whose forts and fleets are strongest."

"Blessed are the meek." No,—"Blessed are the strong: for they shall inherit the earth."

So do the beatitudes of the new order clash with those of the old.

I say that the world has not taken the Master seriously. The same is true of the Church. We say, and do not. His words are constantly on our lips, but we neither believe them in our hearts nor practice them in our lives. He placed the emphasis on life. We have shifted it to belief. But the time has come when we must begin to take Him at His word. Foolish as His sayings may seem to men of the old order, nevertheless He spoke the truth. He put the emphasis where it belongs. The meek shall inherit the earth. The dream of the poet, the vision of the seer, the trend of evolution, and the life realized in the Son of Man—these all point to the fulfilment of these words. Old types shall pass away. The new spiritual giant is in the making. The old aristocracies shall fall before the new spiritual aristocracy whose head is Christ. The kingdoms of the world shall become His, and He shall reign forever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

PRAYER

Grant, O Father, that Christ may so dwell in us that His matchless spirit of love and mercy and truth, together with His unflinching and uncompromising loyalty to God, may become our disposition. Help us so to live that the mind that was in Him may be in us, and that His spirit may hasten the coming of His Kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MINOT C. MORGAN

A forward looking preacher stands in the pulpit made historic through the ministry of such stalwarts as Edward Pence, Wallace Radcliffe, and Arthur T. Pierson. Dr. Minot C. Morgan was born in Princeton, New Jersey, in 1876, growing up under the cultural and spiritual influences of a Presbyterian Manse. Princeton University gave him his first wide outlook on life and Princeton Seminary opened the vistas still wider. After graduating from the Seminary in 1900 he was ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, preaching with unusual favor in Long Island and New Jersey until 1917 when he was called to Fort Street Presbyterian Church of Detroit. Since that time he has been making an ever widening influence throughout the state and nation, acting as Chairman of the Trustee Board of Alma College, Trustee of Princeton Seminary, and Secretary of the Board of Education in his own denomination. His ministry in Detroit has been refreshing, vital, and commanding; his preaching has been intellectual, forceful, and convincing. There is no hesitant note sounded by him in regard to industrial and social justice, and the summons of Jesus Christ to leave the old paths and pioneer in new and untried ways. Preaching as he does every Sunday to a large group of financial and industrial leaders he has revealed a binding loyalty to Jesus Christ that has won for him the respect of the entire city, and has actually kindled fires of glowing righteousness on countless thousands of hearts. What a gracious privilege to minister in such a way and in such a church!

LOYALTY TO CHRIST—"Ye did not choose me," says Jesus, "but I chose you and appointed you," "ordained you" the old version has it. And it is no disparagement of the rites of any ecclesiastical organization, to say, that His is the only ordination that really counts. The ceremonies of the Church possess a beauty and a value which none may gainsay, but they are impotent to clothe with spiritual power one whom Christ has not appointed, and though they be denied to one of His chosen, they cannot thwart his ministry. Behind the laying on of hands by Bishop or by Presbytery, is that election to service of which the Master spoke when He said, "I chose you."

Now if I believe that this Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, who can say, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth," then I can conceive of no higher, no more impelling commission than His. It is futile to deny that Christianity is a religion of authority. One of our university professors in his discussion of the religion of a mature mind, says in effect, that a religion, which cannot command, merits only the contempt of a full grown man. I rejoice to believe that my ministry is in fulfilment of a divine command; otherwise I have missed my calling. I should certainly go at something else, unless I believed that He had ordained me to go and bear fruit, fruit that shall abide. He has called me to a task of enduring productivity, and in loyal obedience to His appointment, I set myself, to do His will, or I am worthless.

Loyalty to Christ however implies not only obedience, but love, love that is the response to His own and should have a like expression. As John says, "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Love is the motive power of all true ministry, and finds its inevitable and joyous expression in His service who said, "If ye love Me, ye will keep my commandments."—MINOT C. MORGAN.

IX

THE EYES OF A YOUNG MAN

MINOT C. MORGAN, D.D.
Fort Street Presbyterian Church

"And Jehovah opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw."—II KINGS 6:17.

This was God's answer to a prophet's prayer for a young man who could not see, and who did not know that he could not see. He knew rather, or thought he knew, that his eyesight was flawless. It was because those keen young eyes of his saw so much, that he was so frightened.

Peacefully had he slept the night before in the quiet little city of Dothan and calmly had he risen at dawn, but before he set about his simple tasks in the service of his master the prophet, he went forth from the house to breathe the fragrant morning air and feast his eyes on the varied beauty of the encircling hills. But so far from giving him needful poise for the day's duties, what he saw terrified him. With unmistakable clearness those piercing young eyes revealed to him not just quiet pasture lands and gently waving trees on hillsides, but a bristling host of soldiery with chariots and horses, completely surrounding the city, blocking every road and by-path, and making escape impossible. Rushing to Elisha, he cries with trembling lip, "Alas! my mas-

ter, how shall we do? " To which the prophet calmly answers, " Fear not, for they that are with us are more than they that are with them." " Is he blind? " thinks the young man. " Have his old eyes grown so dull that he cannot see the extent of this besieging army, and imagines that the paltry company in little Dothan outnumbers this Syrian host? "

Ah! lad, you are the one that is blind, and those eyes of yours are so keen that you do not know it. You think that because you can see every flashing spear on yonder hill and every restive chariot horse that you can outsee the old prophet. Listen, boy, he is praying for you. Hear what he says. " Jehovah, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see." In amazement the young man feels the answer of the prayer. He *sees*, sees as he had never seen before, sees nearer than the circling hosts of Syria, the inner circle of the hosts of heaven. First he beheld just the threat of material force, then, with opened eyes, the glory of spiritual power and the assurance of redeeming love.

Now the readiness with which God answered the prophet's prayer is a revelation of the divine heart. It is indicative not only of His regard for an old man's entreaty, but of His love for a young man's soul and His longing that the eyes of the soul may see. So when men of old, speaking as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, declared a more wonderful revealing of God that was yet to be, they said, " Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped—and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy

shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

And when at last prophetic promise found its fulfilment in God's highest revelation of Himself to humanity and in humanity, we behold the Man of Nazareth opening blind eyes. Indeed it was so distinctive of Jesus and so clear an indication of His Messiahship that when discouraged John the Baptist sent from the Herodian dungeon with the query, " Art thou he that cometh or look we for another? " the Master simply continued for a time His gracious ministry to human need and then said to the messengers, " Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see: *the blind receive their sight,* and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them."

Beside the road near Jericho, there sat a blind beggar, the son of Timæus, well aware of his need and wretched in the poverty of his darkened world. Suddenly his ear detects the tread of approaching feet and the hubbub of many voices. " What is it all about? " he asks. " Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," is the answer. " Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me! " he cries. " What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? " asks Jesus. " Rabboni, that I may receive my sight," is his eager entreaty. " Go thy way," says the Master, " thy faith hath made thee whole." And straightway he received his sight and followed Him in the way. " Go my way, saidst thou, Lord? My way is now thy way. Clearly I see it and go that way with thee."

The Scripture gives us also the contrasting picture of another blind man, a young man of unusual beauty of countenance and character with eyes as clear and vision as keen as Elisha's servant. Jesus, looking upon him, loved him, and longed to open his eyes, too. The young man was not wholly blind, to be sure, it was an interest in spiritual things that had brought him to Jesus: on his lips trembled the question, " Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? " Nevertheless, his love for material things so blinded him to spiritual values that when Jesus said to him, " Sell all that thou hast and distribute to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me," the young man, despite all the beauty and grace of character which he possessed, *could not see it.* " His countenance fell at the saying and he went away sorrowful, for he was one that had great possessions."

Ah! there is a pathos in the picture of Bartimæus, poor blind beggar, and fully aware of his blindness, but there is pathos greater still in the blindness of the rich young ruler, a blindness to spiritual values, a blindness of which he was doubtless unaware.

The tragedy of the Church at Laodicea was, in part, the tragedy of an unawareness of spiritual need, a blindness unguessed. To her the Lord declared, " Because thou sayest I am rich and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich; and white garments that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy

nakedness be not made manifest; and eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, *that thou mayest see.*"

Ah! the pathos of it. Eyes have they but they see not. And are they without their counterpart today? I suppose those Laodiceans were delightful people socially; they were doubtless possessed of the refinement and culture which is more easily attainable by those in affluent circumstances than by those who are held down by poverty to irksome and unending toil. Many of them may have been possessed of great personal charm, which made them delightful companions. Paul evidently thought a good deal of them, he sends salutations to them in the Colossian Epistle, and urges that the people in Colosse get the letter which he wrote to Laodicea and read it. He prays for them that they may be comforted, that their hearts may be knit together in love, that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. Lovely people—but lacking in spiritual vision. And such there are today. Young men with as fine a physical equipment as the youth at Dothan, and with as great a personal charm as the rich young ruler, whom Jesus looked upon and loved, but as yet they have not the vision of spiritual things, and they know not their own blindness. Many are they, of course, of whom this is not true, young men whose eyes have been opened, and, while the old men are dreaming dreams, they are seeing visions, as the ancient prophet Joel had foretold, and as the apostle of Pentecost proved. These are they in each succeeding generation whose vision is of the things unseen and

eternal and whose obedience to their heavenly vision transforms them and their world.

But, many are they, alas! whose eyes reveal to them only the swords and spears and helmets on Dothan's hills, and who see not nearby the encircling God.

And who are they, these keen-eyed men who cannot see? You will discover them among the rich, who have found in wealth, power, position, social standing, luxury, freedom and everything their heart desires. When they say, " What is such a man worth? " they mean " How great are his possessions? " Their whole life is filled with that which has a monetary equivalent, that which may be bought at a price.

Jesus' comment on the episode of the rich young ruler was the sad lament, " How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Many do, of course, but the reason for it that Jesus assigns is this, that " with God all things are possible." It is He that opens eyes blinded by wealth that they may see.

But you will discover unseeing eyes not only among the rich, but among the poor, whose thought is focussed upon the struggles for existence, whose life is made up of toil and sleep in unending succession with an occasional hour of dissipation. There is no vision here, just dull monotony.

Many are those, of course, among the ranks of the poor, whose very hardships and heartaches have brought God near; conscious of their great need, they have found great peace through the vision they have had of Him who satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with good.

But many are they also, who see Him not, and whose eyes tell them only the story of a life that is hard and toilsome and cruel and sordid. Oh! the pathos of their lot, who, poor in this world's goods, are blind also to the riches of His grace, whose arms are ever circling us in love.

Still further, among those for whom a prophet's prayer may well be offered that their eyes may be opened, are a goodly company of men of business; fine, clean-cut, upright, intelligent, energetic, successful: men of affairs, they are, but the affairs that fill their thoughts are of the great enterprises in which they are involved, commercial and industrial. Within these spheres they may be men of vision; indeed, they never would have succeeded if they were not. But their spheres are limited and, great though they be, they are not great enough to satisfy the soul of man. Utter absorption in them is sure to dwarf the soul, and dull the vision of finer things.

In this group also we rejoice to find a great company who refuse to limit life to a business enterprise, who discover spiritual values in their daily tasks, and who see beyond the obvious things of a material world into the reality and the beauty of the world of spiritual life, into the Kingdom of God.

Yes, but what of the others, whose keen business sense does not sense the things of the spirit, and whose eyes see not life's higher values? For them, with deep affection and with real concern, we pray Elisha's prayer.

Another group to whom our thought turns naturally

are the young men of our colleges and universities; splendid fellows they are, in the full vigor of youth, with all its fine enthusiasm. The world of science is opening before them, for the first time. It has captivated them, it fills their mental horizons full. To them it is the story of the universe and its explanation. Imagination thrills with the tale of its evolution through the æons of nebular formation, and then the geologic ages of this earth, and then the fascinating development from primordial life through countless millenniums up to man.

And so to many a keen young mind evolution, instead of being as it is, the story of the way God works, becomes a substitute for God, and telescope and test-tube take the place of faith. Multitudes there are, of course, of whom this is not true, who though men of science are also men of faith, and because men of science are men of deeper, richer faith. They may state their faith in terms unfamiliar to older generations and unknown to many an ancient creed. But they see God, that is the important thing. Nearer than Dothan's hills and all that fill them, nearer than the noisy enginery of industry or commerce, nearer than all the startling revelations of material science, they see God, the personal God, the Father of our spirits. But some there are who lack this vision, whose minds are so flooded with truths that they have not grasped the unity of truth, whose eyes are so enraptured with the sight of things that they have failed to see Him, without whom this multitude of things are chaotic and irrational. For them, with yearning love, the

prophet prays, " Jehovah, open their eyes, that they may see."

And do you know, there is no more glorious thing that the Eternal God can do than just to answer that prayer; indeed, in a sense, *that* constitutes the whole story of God's redemptive love, in the revealing of Himself, whom to know is life eternal.

Here is the meaning of prophecy—God's revealing of Himself through inspired men who spake as they were moved by His Spirit. Through their lips and by their pens, through their minds and through their hearts, God was manifesting Himself to men as a Person, holy, strong, loving, unfailing, who forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diseases, who redeemeth our life from destruction, who crowneth us with loving kindness and tender mercies.

Here is the meaning of the *Incarnation.* Saith Jesus, " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." " I and the Father are one." Ever has He borne the name Immanuel, God with us. " In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." His word is the word of God. His works are the works of God. And we behold " the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Here is the abiding significance of the *Cross.* " *God* so loved the world." " Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

" In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of Sacred Story,
Gathers round its head sublime."

Here is the heart of the Gospel, without which we cannot adequately know the love of God. Here was the living center of Apostolic preaching. And here, unless we are to preach another Gospel, must be ours. " Christ—Crucified " . . . " Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Here, also, is the glory of the *Resurrection. God's* triumph over death and over sin, through Him " who was delivered up for our offenses, and raised again for our justification." It is God, the glorious *God,* that " raised him from the dead and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Here, too, is the purpose of the *Holy Spirit* dwelling in our hearts, that He may make God known, guiding us into the truth, revealing to us our Father's will and inclining our hearts to obey it, as we see it manifest in Jesus Christ.

Thus through all the story of God's redemptive work for men, there runs the increasing purpose to reveal Himself to them, to open their eyes that they may see, to enlighten their minds that they may know, to warm their hearts that they may love with heart and soul and strength and mind the Lover of their souls.

The answer, then, which God gave to Elisha's prayer was not just an exceptional miracle; rather it was the characteristic expression of a gracious power, which the divine Father is ever eager to give. You and I, then, may offer that prayer with entire confidence that God

will hear and answer. We may offer it for ourselves, that we see Him more clearly and know Him more perfectly. We may offer it for others, for those splendid young men of this generation who, keen-eyed and alert, are some of them unaware of their blindness and others of them groping toward the light. To that intercession God will graciously respond. He may not do it with that suddenness which characterized the opening of the young man's eyes in Dothan, or the blinding of the young man's eyes with the surpassing glory of a heavenly vision on the road to Damascus. Ordinarily the knowledge of the truth is more gradually acquired, though our apprehension of it at certain crises in our spiritual experience may thrill our minds with sudden bursts of glory. But whether vision comes as instantly as to Bartimæus, or as gradually as to that other blind man who saw "men as trees walking," and later "saw all things clearly," it matters not, so vision comes. And then within and beneath and above this wonderful universe in which we dwell and all the fascinating texture of human life is seen that spiritual reality, which interprets all and which shall endure forever.

And I like to think that those who by the grace of God have beheld this truth centering in Christ and revealed through Him, are specially commissioned to make Him known who said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may *see,* and seeing your good works may glorify *your Father* who is in heaven. For this is life eternal that they should know the only true God and him whom he hath sent, even Jesus Christ."

"And his servants shall serve him and they shall *see his face.*"

PRAYER

O Gracious Father, who hast formed the eye of man for vision and the soul of man to know Thyself, illumine our minds we beseech Thee by the light of Thy truth. Help us to see Thee in all Thy creation and supremely in Him who is the effulgence of Thy glory and the express image of Thy person, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we may know the truth and that the truth may make us free, free from darkening error and enslaving sin. Enable us we pray to grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ till that day when we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. Meantime may it be our joy to take our place and do our part in His gracious service, who would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REINHOLD NEIBUHR

Reinhold Neibuhr was born in Wright City, Missouri, thirty-two years ago last June. Elmhurst College and Eden Theological Seminary furnished him his earlier training. Later on, he studied at Yale Divinity School, and Yale University granted him the degree of M.A. Twice has he gone to Europe with the Sherwood Eddy parties, giving special study to the conditions in France and Germany. Apparently his schooling is only well begun; there are few keener or more eager minds in the ministry. True to the spirit of youth he has broken with tradition. He is never satisfied with conditions as he finds them; and is ever holding up the shallowness and weakness of modern civilized life. Nevertheless, one can always find the note of noble belief and high faith in his messages, for the word he brings is of a new day, a better day, a day different from all others in that Christ will be given right of way in business, society, and religion. Brilliancy of mind, fervor of spirit, and steadfast allegiance to Jesus Christ combine to make his sermons and addresses among the most effective of the many worthy discourses brought to the people of this city. His fellows honored him last year by electing him President of the Detroit Pastors' Union.

REALISM AND IDEALISM—The tragedy of our day is that those who see with acute penetration the weaknesses of our civilization have little hope for mankind, while those who have inherited the traditional hope do not seem capable of analyzing the sins of our day. Our realists are too cynical; and our idealists are too sentimental. We need prophets who are not afraid to know the worst about man, and who will yet maintain their faith in him. In other words, we need a religion which does not gloss over any ugly facts in human life; but approaches the total facts of life from the perspective of spiritual faith. With such a religion we can preach repentance without being tempted to despair and can be optimists without being corrupted with hypocricy.—REINHOLD NEIBUHR.

X

TYRANT SERVANTS

REINHOLD NEIBUHR, M.A.
Bethel Evangelical Church

"The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath."—MARK 2:27.

Man has a curious weakness for giving such unthinking devotion to the institutions and governments which are meant to serve him that he tempts them to assume arbitrary power over him and to conceive their life as an end in itself and not as a means to an end. Human history is filled with evidences of this curious perversity. Jesus encountered it in the institution of the Sabbath. Whatever motives of tabu may first have caused primitive man to set aside a holy day and the early Semite to keep the Sabbath, religion at its best and as the prophets interpreted it, justified the Sabbath for its social and human value as a day of rest and worship.

The Sabbath, according to the best Jewish thought, was made for man; but so great was the concern of the legalist for the keeping of the Sabbath and so great was the fear of the people that they might violate its sanctity that it became hedged about with a hundred and one laws calculated to enforce rest and quiet. These laws interfered so much with natural, wholesome and

even necessary activities that to keep the Sabbath became a burden rather than a boon to man. Jesus, with that natural regard for the wholesome and natural and instinctive aversion to artificialities which characterized His whole ministry, was in constant conflict with the Sabbath legalists.

At the present moment we are not interested in the immediate question of Sabbath observance, except to note that our own Puritanism is not always free of the sins which Jesus imputed to Sabbath legalists. What interests us is the wider tendency in human thought and action of which the Sabbath legalism is but a symptom and the wider implication of the principle for which Jesus contended. Institutions are made for men and not men for institutions. Except by constant and jealous vigilance it is impossible to restrain the servants of mankind from becoming its tyrants.

The problem of keeping our servants in their proper place has been a vexing one throughout the history of civilization. Governments which were meant to bless human life with the virtues of social order have easily become the oppressors of men; religions which should have emancipated man from every tyranny elevated the priest into positions of irresponsible autocracy; mysteries such as those of man's sex life in which some of the best values of human life are enmeshed have become the occasion for degradation, as for instance in the phallic orgies of primitive religions. Nothing is so good and so useful but that it cannot be corrupted by excessive veneration. If it has been a problem throughout human history to observe a due sense of

proportion in dealing with tools and means of human happiness, that problem is more urgent today than ever before. Human life is more social than it once was; and, therefore, the authorities which are the by-products of social order are more potent; life is more complex, and the institutions through which we express it have therefore become more difficult to control.

It is a real question in the modern day whether the nation has not become as much a foe as a servant of human happiness. Democracy emancipated us from the caprice of individual tyrants. But it made the nation more powerful than it was in the days of personal government. Tyrants ceased their wars when their exchequers were emptied, but democratic government can levy taxes upon unborn generations and thus continue warfare long after a stage of practical insolvency has been reached. Rapid means of communication make centralization of authority over vast masses of men possible. Thus science and democracy co-operate in making government at once more stable and more centralized and therefore more potent for good and for evil. If we cannot eliminate international anarchy from world civilization, this simply means that we have made government more potent for evil. Mediæval peasants were left practically uncorrupted by hatred through the feudal struggles of their day. A modern war sows seeds of hatred in the hearts of even the children; and our vaunted science gives us the weapons to transmute this hatred into effective and wholesale murder.

Nationalism is not of itself an evil thing. It is not

evil that men should organize their social life. It is natural and inevitable. But if one unit of this social life, the nation, sets itself up as final and absolute because it happens to be larger than the others, though not large enough to include the whole human family, then the nation becomes a peril to human happiness. It is such a peril today. It demands the sacrifice of human and personal values, and makes claims upon lives of eternal significance for ends that have no eternal value. Trade routes and spheres of influence, markets and sources of raw material, instinctive hatreds and instinctive fears, imperial ambitions and economic greed, these are the secular motives and the secular aims for which human life is degraded. Nothing can defeat the arrant secularism of our present international order (or it would be better to say our international anarchy) than an appreciation of human beings as divinely and eternally significant souls.

Nations were made for men and not men for nations. If we could see human beings from the perspective of Jesus we would not hold them in contempt nor in fear, and we would soon bring the nationalism which degrades and corrupts their life under the dominion of the soul.

These big cities in which we live and of which we are so inordinately proud should be regarded with more suspicion and less veneration by the men whose servants they are expected to be. We are as foolishly proud of the size of our cities as of the strength of our nations. What difference does it make whether the city in which I live has a hundred thousand or a mil-

lion inhabitants? It means overcrowded schools, unassimilated populations, profiteering in real estate, pitifully small apartments and imperiled family life and all the other evils which attend the overcrowded metropolis. How puerile we are in our vanity over our cities. We recount the story of their rapid growth to every passing stranger.

But we forget that we never built them for men. We build the factories first and the men stream in from the farms and from across the seas to seek work there. Providing these men with homes and comforts and cultural advantages is an afterthought with most of us. We make it as difficult, in fact, as we know how for these newcomers to gain a foothold in our city. If we have a shrewd suspicion that the city will grow in a certain direction we make haste to buy real estate there so that we may sell it to the newcomer at a profit. The ethical implications of this practice seem to escape us entirely.

I am not competent to weigh the virtues of rural with those of urban life, but I am convinced that the impersonal relationships of a city are not conducive to the highest morality. Most of us are what we are because of a certain amount of social pressure and social influence. If the individual is completely detached from his social group and lives an isolated life, as he frequently does in the metropolis, it is not easy to maintain the highest form of virtue. No man can estimate the number of moral tragedies which the loneliness of a big city occasions. We are, of course, not totally blind to this problem of the city, and we try in church

and lodge and club to personalize the relationships of the city. But our efforts are hardly diligent and far-reaching enough to accomplish the purpose. There are social thinkers who think that the large city is hopeless and that the only hope for an industrial civilization is to decentralize industry and destroy the metropolis. Perhaps they are right. Whether they are or not, our immediate problem is to do more than we have done to make the city a servant of men. If we have a sincerely spiritual interest in men, we must insist with greater passion and more effective social action that cities were made for men and not men for cities.

Industry is another of these dangerously ambitious servants of man which is constantly setting up its own life as an end in itself. Ideally the modern machine with its multiplied productivity should be a blessing to man. It should provide him with more comforts and more leisure. To a certain extent it has done that.

The eight-hour day is the fruit not of legislation, but of labor-saving mechinery. Our comforts have certainly been increased tremendously by machine industry. But no one seems concerned to note the price we have paid for these blessings. Creative joy has been taken out of work by the automatic machine. The cultural advantages which were inherent in many forms of toil in the hand-craft period have been destroyed. The more we have humanized the machine the more have we dehumanized the mechanic and given him nothing in return but a fairly decent wage and the doubtful blessing of an automobile. We have a naïve delight in making and owning things. It is not easy to

recognize the personality of the worker in a big factory, but we have not even tried to do it. Every form of industrial democracy is anathema with us because we fear that it will retard production. Everything is sacrificed for efficiency, mechanical efficiency. No industrialist gives a second's thought to the inevitable tendency of modern industry to destroy the cultural advantages of toil and leave the laborer without even a desire for a richer and fuller life. If labor does express some dissatisfaction with the terms of its employment, we set that down as rank ingratitude. We are paying good wages, and we do not see what more these ingrates want.

We fail to see that the possession of the things which modern industry produces is an unmixed blessing. It is nice, to be sure, to have the vacuum cleaners, radios, phonographs and automobiles, which are the characteristic products of industrial enterprise. But we have become the slaves of these things. They are in the saddle and they ride mankind. We are more comfortable than happy. We conduct our business task with feverish diligence in order that we may have all these things in proper abundance; and then we use them to live as hectically in our leisure as in our business. And we prefer luxurious possessions to necessary ones. How many young men are buying automobiles on the part payment plan, who ought to be saving up their money for a house? That is one reason for the housing shortage and the little apartments in which it is quite impossible to raise a family.

Modern industry is a problem not only for the pro-

ducer and the consumer, but for the community as such. For industry aggravates national frictions and is one of the roots of war. The hungry maw of the great machine must be fed, and so we post o'er land and ocean for raw materials and do violence to the backward peoples who possess the materials which we need for our industrial enterprise. Our worry only starts with raw materials, for we need markets as well. The big machine is constantly producing more than we consume, no matter how high we raise our standard of living. Consequently we must find world areas into which these excess products can be thrown. Thus inevitably we find industry behind every kind of imperialism. What a vicious circle we are in. We sacrifice personality for the production of things; we sacrifice serenity and quiet in the use of the things made at so great a price; and then we imperil peace with our brothers as we try to impose our things upon the less-favored portion of mankind. Surely it is time to say with force that industry was made for man and not man for industry.

Of course, it is easier to say that than to reorganize industry in terms of its principle. The fact is that our industrialism and our nationalism and our urbanism are all intermeshed so that the real question for modern man to solve is whether he wants civilization to be for man or man for civilization. Our conquest of nature and the resulting wealth, our rapid means of communication and the resulting centralization of authority within nations and increased intimacy of contact between nations, our great industrial units and the re-

sulting inequality of privilege and power, all these characteristics of our modern life have made civilization a very dubious blessing. We are comfortable, but we are not happy; we are living hectic but not abundant lives; we have leisure, but no capacity to enjoy it; we have a world neighborhood, but no world brotherhood. We shall probably secure none of the things we really need until we regard our whole modern life with less naïve delight. We are too uncritical about it. We have permitted civilization to become our master through the same weakness which raised servants to tyrants in other days. To make civilization again the servant of man will require a penetrating insight on the one hand and a robust faith on the other. The people who really believe in human values, and who hold to a transcendent conception of the soul must be more sophisticated in dealing with the enemies of the soul; and the people who know modern civilization and have discerned its general tendencies with acute penetration need more faith in men. The soul has no victorious champion because its friends do not understand its enemies; and those who understand its enemies do not believe in the soul.

Logically, religion should be the final champion of personality. For it is only a world view which is grounded in religious faith that can properly appreciate the precious mite of personality which man must defend against impersonal nature, and again against an impersonal nature that it has not learned the art or acquired the interest to champion the soul against the oppressions of civilization. That is why so many

humble folks who suffer most from the weaknesses of modern civilization are disavowing religion. That is why labor is growing cynical throughout the world. Nothing will convert it from that cynicism but a religion which can prove itself socially and morally effective, which can bring our economic and international life under the dominion of the interests of the soul.

We need people with such a consistently spiritual appreciation of human life that they will instinctively oppose every social custom and every political institution which dwarfs and degrades men. If the factory robs men of personal values it must be changed until it builds character and creates happiness. If the city imperils virtue it may have to be destroyed, providing it cannot be reformed. If the nation outrages the diviner qualities of human life and sacrifices eternal values for petty ends, it must be reformed until it becomes a true servant of human personality.

To accomplish these herculean tasks we need a very robust faith. Only a strong faith in men as children of God, rooted in a spiritual conception of the universe, will prompt men to champion the cause of the soul against the world. But this faith must be as discerning as it is robust. The enemies of the soul all profess friendship for it, so that naïvete in the champions of the soul becomes a besetting sin. It is not easy to penetrate through the conscious and unconscious hypocrisies of modern civilization. Only the force of a robust faith and the keenness of a trained intellect will do it. If we can maintain our faith and put in its

service the best social intelligence, we will be able, in time, to refashion our civilization into something akin to the Kingdom of God. If we fail in either spiritual passion or moral intelligence, our vaunted civilization will become a huge Moloch which will devour our children. Let us look through the eyes of Jesus with His cool discernment upon all our social customs and traditions, upon all our economic practices and industrial methods, upon our great communities of race and class and ask: Are these man's servants or his oppressors?

PRAYER

Our God and Father of us all, we pray Thee that we may come to know the worth of man, and that we may come to understand that the mission of Jesus was to bring to man a way of life which is above the physical. Teach us the true dignity of man. Help us to find the joy there is in giving to our lives the importance which Thy Son has ascribed to them. Help us to find the joy which follows a definite will and program to bring abundant living to the world where we live. Grant that the Christ may find in us willing workers, ready to take determined stand against every power of tradition and present tendency which would narrow the vision and beat back the progress and the larger life of men. We ask in His name. Amen.

ARTHUR LEE ODELL

Dr. Odell was born on a farm in Missouri, and has spent most of his life so far in the Southwest. He was graduated from the Missouri Valley College in 1904 and from Union Theological Seminary in 1907, having been ordained in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1905. His later pastorates before coming to Detroit were at Kingshighway Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Missouri, and the First Presbyterian Church, Phoenix, Arizona. For a short period he was President of the Henry Kendall College, Tulsa, Oklahoma. In every situation he made a splendid record for himself and the Kingdom of Christ. Since 1922 he has been minister at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, where he is accomplishing a highly successful community service in one of the fine residential districts of Detroit. However, it is as preacher of the gospel of Jesus that Dr. Odell excels, as one very prominent layman has said about him, " Never failing to preach a compelling message, which sends the congregation home dreaming of the day of Righteousness and of their own part in that great day." This sermon is characteristic of the writer—unadorned, direct, emphatic, thoughtful and challenging. It is certainly worth our while to pause and enquire concerning our faithfulness to the high privilege of keeping the prophet alive—the prophet in our own hearts and the prophet in other lives.

STANDING IN HIS PLACE—To know the peace of Christ's pardoning grace "that passeth understanding": to hear God calling us to go for Him; to accept humbly and in faith the responsibility of being set apart to the Gospel ministry; to see men, women and helpless children suffering from sin, lost to guidance, usefulness, the fellowship of God, and yet to have compassion on them; to stand as a messenger of the Savior, trying to live righteously while seeking to proclaim the "unsearchable riches of Christ;" to pay the full price of such a ministry in ceaseless toil and sacrifice that salvation may be for all and that peace and goodwill may come upon the earth; that, to me, is to stand in His place. How strange and wonderful that any of us should so be called of God.

—ARTHUR LEE ODELL.

XI

KEEPING THE PROPHET ALIVE

ARTHUR LEE ODELL, D.D.
Westminster Presbyterian Church

"And Elijah said, Fear not,—make me therefore a little cake first."—I KINGS 17:13.

This may seem like a pitiless and selfish request. It is a man speaking. He is in good health, has no family, can wring his living from the mountains under normal conditions. It is a poor despairing widow to whom he speaks. She is gathering sticks to cook a last meal for herself and her son before they lie down to die of hunger, for a famine is upon the land.

But the name of the man is Elijah, and that gives a more sympathetic mood to our thoughts. He is a prophet of the Lord. The famine has touched him, too, and God has sent him to be fed by the woman and her son for a season. It was a hard time to live. There was much anxiety because scarcity of food and water threatened all with starvation. They were also serious days for Israel on account of political and religious conditions in the kingdom. Ahab was king. His wife, Jezebel, of foreign blood and religion, was a real ruler behind the throne. She was seeking to supplant the worship of Jehovah with idolatry. Obadiah was a kind of prime minister under Ahab. He trusted Jehovah

and took deep, though secret, interest in the prophets of the Lord who were trying to preserve for the Jews their own religion.

On one side were Jezebel and her priests of Baal, and with them lay the advantage of political power through being closely associated with the weak king, Ahab. On the other side were the deeply religious Jews, the prophets, among whom Elijah was the outstanding figure, and with them was the advantage of having God as a helper. The contest for supremacy was intense, bitter at times. Driving idolatry from among the Jews was like doing away with the liquor traffic in our own country.

These were weighty days. The whole religious future of the Jews, in fact the ultimate spring of Christianity, so far as human powers go, depended upon the final issue of this contest, and God's chief agencies, through which to send victory for spiritual religion, were the prophets of the day. Destroy them and Baalism could reign supreme until it should die down of its own infections.

It was most important, then, that Elijah be kept alive by the widow at all costs to herself and her son. If the prophet were kept, she would be helping to save her people from idolatry to the worship of the one true God. If the prophet were destroyed all was lost for herself and her people.

Why was this so? Because of what the prophet stood for among the people as the religious leader of his time, according to the information given us over and over by those who have been our teachers. Let us review their instructions.

He was the representative of God to them. He was God's messenger, spokesman. Through him God's will concerning the children of earth was made clear. His soul was alert and sensitive to God's spirit, becoming aware of the voice of the Almighty speaking to men, and through him as a mouthpiece God spoke to Israel. Losing the prophet, then, would have been a hushing of God's voice among them.

The prophet was a champion of righteousness. As represented by Elijah he was courageous, uncompromising with self or others; lofty, lonely, and persistent in his efforts to keep the righteousness of God active in human affairs. Centuries ahead of his time in his thoughts, hopes and ideals, he was a mighty lift to his age, keeping a constant strain and tension of upward pull on the affairs of individuals and of state.

He was the antagonist of evil. He gave and claimed no quarters in his battle against wickedness. Nothing bad seemed to escape his searching vision, and his frank denunciation sometimes staggered sin in high places. His sensitive soul never became dulled by the deadening powers of ever-present corruption in politics and religion. Even his fervor in waging this war seemed to suffer few drops in temperature. There was no respect of persons in his attack upon wickedness; even the king had to meet the burning words of his condemnation. His warfare rose to the grandeur of the battle of the giants as when he met the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. The tragic was always interwoven with his challenges, his contests. It was a life-and-death struggle between right and wrong.

One side must lose disastrously, the other must finally win gloriously. What a champion of good, what a foe to evil was he! Such is every true prophet of God.

The prophet was the hope of his time. Unless he could be heard and obeyed all would be lost. Idolatry and its attending wickedness would win the day. Then would come the decline and death of those moral values and religious truth which had been gathered through the centuries by the Jews. In saving Elijah the widow helped to save religion for the Jews and finally for the world. So is religion, that greatest boon of the race, ever dependent upon the prophet for its life. Thus does God choose to keep the prophet among us. It is His way of ever keeping His messages ringing in our ears. There have been times when great prophets were almost numerous, and there have been times when they seemed few or quite silent among their generation. But always God has kept more prophets alive than any one soul knew; so has religion lived on and advanced in purity of type and power of influence.

Nor shall we believe for a moment that the prophets are absent from our own day. They are to be found among men, strong and faithful for righteousness Some are business men, educators, leaders in moral and social reform, ministers of the gospel and statesmen. Are there not to be found in every great profession of our day some who have a keen sensitiveness to God's will, who are heroic champions of right against wrong, on whom we depend for keeping alive the sense of God's presence among us and of our right relationship

to Him? They are the mighty pillars bearing the temple of civilization in these days of reconstruction.

Is not the prophet to be found among the next generation already rising to succeed us? It is so easy, apparently, to think he is not among the young. Yet we must believe God and know that He will not leave any age totally without these high spirits of guidance. Surely we cannot live sympathetically near to the youth of our time without soon becoming convinced that among them are the prospective prophets. God keeps sending into our homes those children who are to bear the cross of being the preachers of righteousness and leaders in all normal lines of professional and business life. How often one sees in the home the one child so gifted with a spiritual sense and so sensitive to high ideals as to make him or her stand out distinctly from the brothers and sisters in the home! Upon these in a peculiar way God has set His seal to separate them unto the peculiar work of a prophet among His people. Among the youth in our colleges and universities there are found those who are much more aware of spiritual and moral truths than are others, and their souls are already aflame with the zeal of their God which shall send them enthusiastically into their tasks as Elijah and John the Baptist went to their work in their own day. If we shall only listen to the quiet voice of God speaking to us in the calm certainty of the circumstances we shall surely learn that God has more than seven thousand prophets, young and old among us, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. In fact, instead of having settled upon us the discouraging gloom and chill

of a coming night of godlessness, we should be able to understand that God's Kingdom keeps coming on earth like an everlasting dawn, as the growing light of the righteous "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Shall we bring the search for the prophet and his blessings a little nearer home? Let us look into our own hearts, to see if we are one of the prophets among men, to see if the prophet born of God within us is still alive and active. Did not each of us start with a prophet in our being? He should still be the commanding figure within unless we have allowed him to starve or be beheaded by some idolatrous Jezebel who has gained the throne of our hearts. Yes, verily, there is the prophet within us; that part of our nature that loves right and hates evil; that trusts God and dares to accept the challenge of faith in the Christ. This prophet within at times comes upon us suddenly, like a fearless and stirred Elijah, to reprove us for some evil deed, to warn us against some contemplated action, to challenge us to a test of some low-browed plan. We sometimes dread to meet him, as Ahab dreaded to meet Elijah. Yet, deep in our souls, we know he is essential to our final victory over evil. He is the helpful better self, the man of iron within us for courage, nobility and sacrifice. What should we do in times of uncertainty and barren necessity, if there were not an Elijah in the upper room of our being?

And how fare these prophets among us and within us today? Where are they? What are the circumstances of their existence? What is our attitude toward

them? Are they cheerful and active as on Carmel's heights or do they languish in hopeless despair beside the failing stream of our religious zeal? Are they given the first fruits of all our attention and efforts; are we, in keeping them alive, truly seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, or are they dying around us and within us through our selfishness and neglect? Do we bake for them a cake first?

Alas! prophets do die, we know, though they have survived hard lots. The people have not always been appreciative of them or kind to them. They have "had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonments—being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated." They have been stoned. How much poorer mankind is today because so many prophets were not received, yea, were even put to death by those to whom they were sent. Like our Christ, their own received them not. Yes, prophets die. Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, Isaiah, John the Baptist all ceased from one cause or another to deliver their mighty notes of warning, to speak forth their words of condemnation or to sing their songs of hope in God. New voices had to break silence. And prophets die today. They die of old age, because of overwork, weary and sore wounded, early in the battle. They die because of neglect, of harsh treatment and misunderstandings on the part of those who should have been their friends. It is so easy for us to destroy the young prophet, to make light of his sentiments, to call him a dreamer, to smile at his high aims for men in whom we have lost at least part of our confidence, to smother

down the fiery zeal of youth which should have been fanned into intenser light and heat. Alas, too, the prophet may die in your soul and mine because of neglect and the abuse given by the base qualities of our lower selves. How many of us have let fade from our inner visions the high ideals of right, of worship, and of love!

Indeed, we may even discover that we are not deeply troubled because the prophet is no longer alive within us. The day may come when we shall hunt the waste places of our souls to find our forsaken Elijah that he may call down showers of refreshing salvation upon our sin-parched and barren hearts. Surely the day will come when we shall realize that in losing our prophets we have lost all, and only by finding him and restoring him to his rightful place through Christ's pardon and love shall we be able at last to save anything at all. If, then, we can keep the prophet alive within us we can be saved; if we can keep enough prophets alive in our country we can save America; if the Church can send out enough prophets unto all peoples, she can bring salvation unto all the world through Christ, who has promised to be with them unto the uttermost.

Join with me, then, my friends, in the noble resolve suggested by this text. Let it be with us, that no sacrifice shall be counted too great for us to make in order to keep alive in our day those great souls of spiritual vision and courage, especially those found among the youth of our homes and communities. Let us give sympathy, co-operation and guidance to them

like Elijah giving to Elisha, like Eli nurturing young Samuel into his God-given work. With them we will gladly share our last morsel of time, energy, or spiritual knowledge that they may have their day of power and deliverance. We shall need to read, study, pray, worship, and work to crush the Ahabs and Jezebels out of our souls, to stand true to every good work, to make sacrifices, to keep alive the prophets within us.

That we are resolved to do, for, in the end, we believe the barrel of meal will waste not, since He to whom the prophets of old looked as one who was to come, calls unto every prophet among us today, giving unto us His great commission, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Shall we at the last be found among the prophets? Shall we be able to keep the prophet alive? "And Elijah said, Fear not—make me thereof a little cake first."

PRAYER

O God, our Father, send Thy Spirit into our hearts this hour to feed the prophet within us, giving him new life and setting him upon his feet to lead our way henceforth out of the woes of sin into the joys of Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

AUGUSTUS P. RECCORD

Dr. Reccord is a graduate of Brown University and Harvard Divinity School. Subsequently he held pastorates in Chelsea, Cambridge and Springfield, Mass., and in Newport, R. I. Before coming to Detroit he was minister of the Church of the Unity, Springfield, for fourteen years. In that city he was especially active in community interests, being called upon repeatedly to take prominent part in charter revisions, the housing commission, and many other civic affairs of exceeding importance. For the past six years Dr. Reccord has been the minister at the First Unitarian Church in Detroit, attracting large attention in the city. In recognition of the conspicuous results of his ministry in New England and Michigan, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Brown University. It ought to be said that, out of a remarkable versatility, he places his greatest emphasis upon social and religious themes. A brilliant mind, a most careful diction, a brotherly spirit and a deep loyalty to the truth in God, as he understands it, contrive to give him a worthy place in the front rank of our preachers. One surely finds in this sermon the evidence of a truly great preaching ministry in this age of skepticism and doubt.

OUR TASK—The challenge of today to the ministry of religion is that we give to spiritual realities the place and importance which they deserve. Too long they have been made to take second rank. The task of the church is to interpret the age to itself. Material progress and intellectual attainment become a menace to civilization unless accompanied by a corresponding growth in moral principle and spiritual power. Then upon the foundation of material prosperity and intellectual achievement which the toil and industry and self-sacrifice of men have laid, the toil and industry and self-sacrifice of other men will build a more stately mansion, builded of the things of the spirit and in which God will be all-in-all.

—AUGUSTUS P. RECCORD.

XII

LIVING THE IMMORTAL LIFE

AUGUSTUS P. RECCORD, D.D.
First Unitarian Church

"This do and thou shalt live."—LUKE 10:28.

In the passage from which this text is taken, reporting a conversation between a certain young lawyer and Jesus, we have represented two distinct attitudes toward the life immortal. One represents the average man, "the man on the street"; the other, the religious teacher. One was thinking of duration; the other of quality. One had found life so good, so abounding in creature comforts and worldly satisfactions, that he yearned to have it prolonged forever. The other's chief concern was to so live as to make life worthy of being prolonged forever. Then one can trust God to provide the means. And so, when the young man came to Jesus and asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?", He referred him to the law in which he had been brought up and asked what it had to say, not concerning man's destiny in another world, but concerning his duty in this. When He received the expected reply, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with heart and soul and mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself," His answer was immediate and conclusive. "This do and thou shalt live." Not live forever, but live. In

other words, he who so lives is made aware that the life that he is living is eternal. As Lyman Abbott once said, "I had rather be mortal and have a right to immortality than be immortal and not be worthy of immortality."

Not long ago I was talking with a friend about the apparent indifference to the Church and to organized religion displayed by otherwise respectable and highly respected men. I had broached the subject deliberately because I knew that he was not a regular church attendant and was associated with a group of men of similar habit. He declared that their attitude was due to no opposition to organized religion or lack of sympathy with religious ideals, but to lack of faith in the Church as the interpreter of those ideals. "Do you know," he said, "that the average man on the street is without any compelling faith in God or in Christ or in the future life?" Further conversation revealed that he had convinced himself that God is a creation of the pious imagination, that Jesus was a self-deluded Galilæan peasant, that this life is all in all. Three score years and ten, more or less, and then the end.

I find it difficult to believe that this represents the attitude of all or even a majority of those who are indifferent to the Church. And yet the existence in any community of even a considerable number of men and women who entertain such opinions concerning the fundamental teachings of the Christian religion constitutes a challenge which we cannot ignore. Even if there was no God, no Christ, no future life,—grant that the Church has been mistaken at all these points,

civilization cannot afford to repudiate the ideals of life and conduct for which the Church has stood. And if it has not been mistaken, if it has glimpsed great truths which one day will receive more adequate expression, civilization cannot afford to become indifferent to the one institution which has dedicated itself unreservedly to the establishment and promulgation of these truths.

"Christ," some one says, "was human as we are;
No judge eyes us from heaven, our sins to scan:
We live no more when we have done our span."
"Well then, for Christ," thou answerest, "Who
can care?"
So answerest thou; but why not rather say:
"Hath man no second life? Pitch this one high!
Sits there in heaven no judge, our sin to see?
More strictly then, the inward judge obey!
Was Christ a man like us? Ah, let us try
If we, then, too, can be such men as He."

This is the only valid conclusion if the man on the street is right. It is the conclusion to which we are driven irresistibly by the logic of human experience. If there is no other life, then this life must be pitched at its highest if it is to be worth while. Faith in God gives to virtue an added incentive, but the virtuous life is of intrinsic worth, irrespective of this faith. Loyalty to Jesus makes it easier to live the good life, but the good life is rendered no less imperative by the absence of that loyalty. Belief in another life helps to reconcile us to the disappointments and failures of this, but the lack of such faith affords no sanction for living this life upon anything but the highest level. Even if

God is a fiction, Christ a delusion, the future life a dream, we cannot dispute Browning's verdict.

> *"It's wiser being good than bad;*
> *It's safer being meek than fierce;*
> *It's fitter being sane than mad."*

But what if the man on the street is not right? What if the Church, in its age-long quest for truth, has not been following a will-'o-the-wisp, but has been drawing ever nearer to the eternal verities? Must we not then accept the poet's conclusion?

> *"My hope is, a sun will pierce*
> *The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;*
> *That after last returns the first,*
> *Though a wide compass round be fetched;*
> *That what began best, can't end worst,*
> *Nor what God blessed once, prove accursed."*

The reply which Jesus gave to the young lawyer's question is in accord with this conclusion. "This do and thou shalt live." If we might venture a paraphrase we could say: "Waste no time in vain conjectures and idle speculations concerning the life to come. Live the life that now is in such a way that an eternity of it will be worth while. Then you may be assured that an eternity will be given."

The pages of the gospel confirm this truth. The disciples did not believe in immortality because of the resurrection of Jesus. They believed in His resurrection because of their consciousness of the eternal character of His life. They saw in Him a quality of life over which death could have no power. A life of such

transcendent worth vindicated its right to endure. Is there anything in your life or mine which is capable of creating this same impression? Are we building in accordance with a life plan which will require more than three score years and ten for its complete realization? Does it justify us in demanding an eternity of existence? Or if our demand were denied, could we accuse the world of injustice? It often seems that those who clamor most for another life have failed to make the best of this, while those whose lives manifest most of this eternal quality are least concerned about what will happen to them when "life's fitful dream" is o'er. The life immortal does not need to be argued. Assume it and it will prove itself.

This truth needs to be emphasized repeatedly in the face of the world's skepticism and unbelief. There was never a time when there was such a persistent demand for some inescapable evidence of the immortality of the soul. This is one of the results of the Great War. The multitude of our dead, their extreme youth, the tragic nature of their going, compelled us to alter our attitude toward death. Whatever we may think of others, we refused to think of these as dead. They are alive forevermore. The result was an increased desire to penetrate the veil of mystery which had always shrouded this familiar experience. We welcomed evidence of survival from whatever source, and experienced a new interest in the supernatural and the occult. As one said: "We demanded enough knowledge of dying to enable us to go on living." And yet there was never a time when there were so many considerations

which make this belief in the life immortal difficult, if not impossible. The relation of mind to matter, of body to soul, of thought to the thinking brain, all as parts of the same living organism, the insignificance of human life on this planet itself when compared with that great system of suns and stars of which it is a part, the difficulty of conceiving of life apart from the body and in some other realm,—such considerations have been exploited for the purpose of undermining our faith in the immortality of the soul. And yet that faith has risen triumphant over every obstacle and vindicated its claim to be the expression of our dearest hopes and deepest convictions.

It is the persistence of this faith which accounts for the success of those mysterious and mystical cults which appear from time to time in the religious world. Christian Science, with its emphasis upon the reality of mind and the unreality of matter; Spiritualism, with its affirmation of the nearness of those whom we have loved and lost; Theosophy, with its exaltation of personal communion between the human soul and its God, —all these derive their power of appeal from their unwavering denial of the materialistic philosophy of the man on the street and their insistence upon the reality and worth of the unseen world. The fact that multitudes of intelligent men and women in every community have embraced one or another of these systems of thought, admits of but one explanation. They find in them, at least for a time, the satisfaction of that spiritual craving which is one of the primary instincts of the race and which refuses to be content with any

philosophy of life which does not rest upon the affirmation that man is primarily spiritual and therefore eternal. Unfortunately, they have often felt constrained to go outside of the churches into which they were born and the religion which has been theirs from childhood in order to gain possession of a truth which lies close to the heart of all genuine religion. And therein lies the warning. Unless our churches place less emphasis upon dogma and more emphasis upon this one great cardinal truth of the reality of the spiritual life, such cults will continue to find willing adherents among an eager and credulous humanity.

How is this emphasis to be laid? Not by argument and special pleading. Faith in the reality of the spiritual life is a matter of experience rather than of demonstration. Jesus did not attempt to prove that the soul is immortal. He assumed it and found that experience justified the assumption. No other hypothesis explained so many of the facts of life or explained them so adequately. He constructed His working theory upon the assumption that life is eternal, and all of its discordant facts slipped into place and ceased to vex Him. The Christian world has not yet discovered or devised a better method. The traditional "proofs" of immortality fail to prove. They are based upon the assumption that the soul is an original entity and therefore imperishable and indestructible. But what of the survival of personality, without which immortality would be equivalent to extinction? Today we draw our inferences from the quality of the soul's life as evidenced by the experience of the race,—from the

instinctive yearning which is characteristic of every age and race and must point to a corresponding reality; from the human reason which demands an eternity for its complete expression; from the moral life which demands an eternity for its fruition, and from the moral law which demands an eternity for its vindication.

Thus immortality is essential to life's completeness. The dominant characteristic of our life on earth is its insufficiency. Human achievement, at its best, is fragmentary. The longest earthly life permits the realization of only a fraction of our hopes and dreams. To deny it any other opportunity for self-expression would be to rob it of its full significance. We are painfully conscious of the disparity between capacity and achievement, virtue and happiness, wickedness and misery.

How can we be reconciled to the blasted hopes, the disappointed ambitions, the shattered affections, which loom so large when we try to conceive of this life as all in all, except upon the assumption that they are a part of an infinite whole, an eternity of living, in which the broken arcs of this present life come to their perfect round? Assume that death ends all, and the world becomes unintelligible. Creation ends in an anti-climax. In the words of John Fiske, it "puts man to permanent intellectual confusion." Assume that death is but an incident in a life that is endlessly progressive, and it presents no problem. Then immortality becomes synonymous with life, growth, progress, attainment. It is not a gift but a challenge. To accept life upon such terms is a privilege. To make the most and

best of it is an obligation. If we accept full responsibility for the life of today, we may safely trust God for the morrow. "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's."

It is this faith which robs death of its sting and deprives the grave of its seeming victory. What Arnold hoped for and Browning affirmed, Jesus assumed. And we are His followers. Instead of the doubtful refrain, "If there is no other life, pitch this one high," we exclaim "Pitch this life high, and its eternal character will be revealed." Dare we ignore this challenge? If you would know that God is and that He is good, live as though you were living "under His eye and by His power." Such a life will vindicate itself and also the conviction upon which it is based. If you would appreciate the beauty and grandeur of the Christ life, follow in His steps,—Live as He would have you live, love as He would have you love, serve as He would have you serve.

Such a life is its own justification and its own sufficient reward. If you would experience the power of the endless life, live as though you were to live forever, and that power will be disclosed. Live for this day only, as though life were simply a matter of what we shall eat and what we shall drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed, and it will be easy to convince ourselves that this life is all in all. We shall agree with the man on the street. But live each day, as the philosopher says, "under the aspect of eternity," with a consciousness of its eternal values, and it will demon-

strate the reality of the faith that springs eternal in the human breast. Then all fear of death will be swallowed up in the consciousness of life. We shall live our lives from day to day, knowing that our ultimate destiny is in our own hands. "We are the masters of our fate; we are the captains of our souls." And we shall lay ourselves down for our last sleep without fear or dread, knowing that we shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness.

"In man's self arise
August anticipations, symbols, types,
Of a dim splendor ever on before,
In that eternal circle life pursues,
For men begin to pass their natures' bound
And find new hopes and cares, which fast supplant
Their proper joys and griefs; and outgrow all
The narrow creeds of right and wrong which fade
Before the unmeasured thirst for good; while peace
Rises within them ever more and more.
Such men are even now upon the earth."

PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we would add our voices to that great chorus of praise and adoration which goes up to Thee from all created things. We thank Thee for the world in which Thou hast placed us and for all that makes it beautiful and fair. We thank Thee for the life with which Thou hast endowed us and for all that makes it of service to others and a satisfaction to ourselves. We thank Thee especially for Him who came to reveal the dignity and worth of our common human nature and its oneness with the Divine. Make us heirs, with Him, of the life immortal and give to us the blessed assurance that because He lives forever, we can never die. In His name we ask it. Amen.

C. H. RUESSKAMP

The Rhineland district of Germany is the birthplace of Rev. C. H. Ruesskamp. Early in his youth he came to America, receiving his primary education in the elementary schools of York, Pennsylvania. His collegiate training was secured in the colleges and seminary of the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, from which he was finally graduated in 1892. It was in that year that he was ordained a member of the Synodical Conference of the Missouri Synod in the city of York, and was called to Little Rock, Arkansas, to take care of the Negro work in that state. In 1897 he opened the English work in Buffalo and served Calvary Church for fourteen years. For the past sixteen years he has served Saint Mark's Lutheran Church in Detroit, which is the representative English Lutheran Church of Michigan and one of the outstanding churches of its kind in America. Here is a man who preaches textual sermons. With no attempt at ornate style he preaches to large and appreciative audiences every Sunday. To judge this man correctly one must hear him. It is safe to say that no man among us carries more spirit into his preaching. As one man puts it, " When you hear this man preach, you know that God is speaking through him." Rev. Ruesskamp was one of the outstanding leaders in relief work among the German charitable institutions during and directly after the war, and he is active in Detroit in social welfare among his people.

PREACH THE GOSPEL—The command of Christ is to preach the gospel, which is the greatest treasure God has bestowed on a sin laden world for its temporal and eternal welfare. Who would not be willing to give up all for it? Justification by grace through faith in Christ is a correct exhibition of that gospel. Who would not do all for it? This guiding principle tolerates no error, and enriches man for time and eternity. Who would not be willing to bear all things for it? To lead men to eternal life at the hand of this unerring guide, when eternity will reveal who has chosen the good part—this and this alone keeps me in the ministry. Though I have had opportunity to make good money in other callings, it is man's salvation, the greatest question in time, which moves me to hold fast to the dearest spot on earth, the pulpit of the church of the living God.

—C. H. Ruesskamp.

XIII

CHRIST IS RISEN

C. H. RUESSKAMP
Saint Mark's English Lutheran

"*But now is Christ risen from the dead.*"—I Cor. 15:20.

"O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

These words will find their echo today in every congregation. Wherever there are bells to ring, wherever there are organs to play unto the Lord, wherever there are lips to praise His holy name, and hearts to rejoice in Him, there today's theme will be: "O sing unto the Lord a new song."

The hymns we have sung during the past weeks have been beautiful. Even the tunes of Lent can touch the heart; yea, even under the cross of Christ the soul of the believer feels the joys of heaven. Willingly does he listen to the cry of Good Friday: "Behold Him suffer, bleeding, die." Readily does he join in the mournful songs, "O bleeding head, and wounded," and "O Lamb of God most holy." These hymns of sad-

ness fill the heart of the sinner with greater joy than all the songs of mirth.

But if, in our hymn-books, we could find no Easter hymns following the Lenten songs and in our Bibles no Easter gospel next to the account of Christ's sufferings and in our churches no Easter festival after the Lenten season, our condition would be sad, indeed. Then our Lenten service, yea, our entire Christian life, would resemble a night without a morning, a heartrending, harsh dissonance without a pleasing and final finale.

Thanks be unto God! This final harmony is being heard today in majestic and jubilant strains throughout the Church. "O sing unto the Lord a new song" is the jubilant cry of Christendom. Angels were the first to announce this new song. Apostles carried it over the world. For centuries it has been spread and handed down from generation to generation, and today it is heard in more than one hundred and fifty tongues on both hemispheres of the earth. Not only in the churches would we sing it with sound of organ and trumpet; we would summon all creation to assist in swelling this mighty chorus. We would call upon the earth to awaken from her winter's slumbers and join in this new song. The little brooks, freed from their icy coverings, shall assist us with their murmurings; the trees with the whisperings of their new green leaves; the birds with their exalting songs, rising up toward the heavens; the sea with her waves dashing against the distant shore, that even the heathen nations may hear it—all these are to join in this new song which has renewed the face of the earth and which

even today gladdens the heart of sorrowful men and fills them with new life.

" Christ is risen " is the new song announced by the apostle in today's text. Let us receive from him our great Easter message.

THE LORD IS RISEN

1. This message is a faithful saying.
2. It is worthy of all acceptation.

This message is true (1) because it bears the blood-stained signatures of many witnesses, (2) because on it is built the massive structure of the Christian Church, and (3) because the heart experiences of all true Christians testify of it.

Christ is risen! He who was buried on Good Friday evening has come forth out of the grave. This message is so wonderful that it frightened those women who first heard it; honest Thomas in plain words declared, " Except I see, I shall not believe "; some in the first Christian congregation at Corinth stated, " There is no resurrection from the dead "; and even today it is doubted and severely attacked. But can this contradiction disturb our Easter joy? Shall the doubts of a melancholy Thomas or the wanton jeers of the Epicureans cause any discord in the new song which we offer this day to our Easter King? God forbid! The great Easter message is true—it bears the blood-stained seal of many faithful witnesses; and here on holy record are found the signatures.

If the Easter message rested only on the assertion of a few weak and nervous women, who in the early

dawn came running from the open grave, trembling from fright, we might doubt the evidence. But it does not. Here we have a large number of witnesses. Cephas has seen him and declares it before all the people on the day of Pentecost. To all of the apostles did He appear, and even Thomas submits and makes the confession, "My Lord and my God." In like manner He is recognized by John at the sea of Tiberias, and John cries out, "It is the Lord." More than five hundred brethren saw Him at one time, and finally Paul affixed his signature to this remarkable record in writing. He says, "And last of all, He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time."

Are these not sufficient witnesses? Are these not trustworthy witnesses? Is it possible that all, including the women, could have been deceived? Was it nothing but the phantoms of an excited imagination? In the evening at Emmaus, as well as in the morning at Joseph's garden? At the sea of Tiberias, as well as in Jerusalem? On the field near Damascus in broad daylight, as well as during the quiet night behind closed doors? Or, if they were not deceived themselves, did they intend to deceive the world? Was the preaching of Christ as the Risen One a concerted plan, an ingenious, well-studied scheme? "Then," cries honest Paul in hot indignation, "we would be found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up." Dare anyone assert this? Can you believe for a moment that Peter on the day of Pentecost stood before that vast crowd and from the steps of the temple lied

to the people, " Him hath God raised up "? Can you believe that Paul stood in the market-place of Athens and there, under the open sky of the omnipresent God, lied, " God will judge the world through Christ, whom he hath raised from the dead "? Can you believe that John should have lied in his old days, when he sat down and began his first epistle with these solemn words full of apostolic earnestness and paternal kindness, " That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and which our hands have handled of the word of life—that we declare unto you "? If these men have lied, who of all creation deserves to be trusted? Then no testimony is true.

But why should these men lie? No physical benefit came to them because of the Easter message. Scorn and contempt was Paul's reward in Athens; and they left him, saying, " What will this babbler say? " It was equally so at Cæsarea when Festus exclaimed, " Paul, thou art beside thyself." Lashings and beatings were the reward of John and Peter for having preached the gospel of the risen One in Jerusalem. Chains and fetters the apostles had to suffer. Every one practically was cast in prison, and finally cruel death was their portion. With but one exception these men confirmed their testimony with their own blood. Will anyone die for a lie? Will anyone become willing to be stoned for a lie as Saint Stephen, beheaded for a lie like Saint James, crucified for a lie like Saint Peter? Will anyone be willing or able to suffer for a lie like Saint Paul?

Danger upon the water, danger among murderers, danger among the Jews, danger among the heathen, danger in cities, in deserts, among false brethren, toil and labor, hunger and thirst, fasting and watching, cold and nakedness, this was the lot of Paul. Could he have been able, rejoicing in all these troubles, to lay his grey head under the axe of the executioner with the blessed assurance, " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness "? Could he have lied all along for twenty years in twenty different countries? Never, no, never! We believe the testimony of these witnesses. It is most assuredly true that Christ has risen from the dead, for these witnesses have signed this message not in ink, but in their own blood. It bears the blood-stained seal of many faithful witnesses.

Upon it rests the building of the entire Church of Christ. " Moreover, brethren," thus writes the apostle at the beginning of our epistle, " I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, and which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." In other words, the writer says that the preaching of Jesus Christ as the crucified One is the foundation on which the congregation at Corinth rested and stood, and it is the foundation on which this present congregation here assembled is founded and built.

Through this Easter message of the crucified and risen Saviour the Holy Ghost has called, enlightened,

sanctified, and preserved in the true faith the entire Christendom upon earth from the beginning to the present time. It is not to be imagined that the gospel would have found an abiding reception in a single soul or that one stone toward the erection of the Church of Christ could have been placed in position, if that first word, " Christ is risen," had been a lie. If you could possibly imagine such a thing, could the massive building of the Church still stand until this day, enduring the storms of nearly two thousand years, if it had been builded on a false foundation, builded upon sand, and supported by a dozen enthusiasts or impostors? Just look at the massive pillars of our own church building. They could not stand upright through the years and support those fine arches, if they were not built on a good foundation. Otherwise they would have long ago crumbled to pieces over our heads. Now, in your imagination, behold the grand, invisible building of the Church of Christ, whose pillars rest upon the soil of five continents, whose walls are vaulting themselves over immense tracts of earth and sea, whose domes vanish in the bliss of heaven, and in whose nave millions of believers of all nations are assembled. Do you think that this Church of Christ would still stand after two thousand years, in which events have occurred which have shaken the very foundations of life and wrought incalculable change, if her pillars had been placed upon and her wall cemented with a lie? Nay, if we would refuse to believe it, these very stones would be compelled to proclaim it, " Christ is risen." This is a true saying,

for upon it rests the massive foundation of the entire Church of God.

And of this also testifies the heartfelt experience of all true Christians. "I am the least of the apostles. By the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not bestowed in vain. But I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." With this confession full of true, heartfelt humility and of noble apostolic consciousness, Paul bears a beautiful testimony to the indestructible life of Jesus and to the living presence and quickening influence of the risen Saviour in the hearts of all His believers. And though none of us would dare to compare ourselves, even at a distance, with the apostle Paul, either in the dignity of the office committed to him, or in the measure of grace received by him, or in the depth of Christian experience, or in the magnitude of service rendered by him, nevertheless every believing Christian may experience within himself something of that inner testimony of the risen and living Saviour.

Every honest man rooted in the faith will smile at the demand to prove the truth that Christ is risen. A simple Christian will say, "You need not make any words; you need not get excited. Here, within my heart, is written much plainer and surer than all the preachers could tell me that Jesus lives and that He lives within me, also. Jesus is with His own through all the days, and He is with me every day. I am sure when I pray that He is close to me. I realize His assistance when at my work, even as He was with the

disciples at the sea when He commanded that they let down the nets. I feel His presence when I hear or read His word. He speaks, and my heart burns as was the case with the two disciples on the journey to Emmaus. I feel His presence when I weep. He comes to me and says, 'Why weepest thou?' as He did with Mary in the garden. Yea, I feel it even when I have sinned. He reproves me, and, taking me tenderly aside, He asks me as He did Peter, 'Lovest thou me?' Christ is risen! Christ lives! This I experienced in the hour of my conversion, when the new man began to live in me. This, by the will of God, I expect to feel when I lie down to die; and then I will beg Him as did the pilgrims, 'Abide with me, dear Lord, for it is toward evening and my day is far spent.' Then with Saint Stephen I shall see the heavens opened and will exclaim, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'"

Yes, Christ is risen. It is not a dead Saviour to whom you pray, but a personal, living Christ, who has given to His own the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Yes, it is a true saying that Christ is risen, for the heartfelt experience of every true Christian testifies of this. O that we all would believe it more firmly and experience it more happily!

Now, if this message is true, it is also worthy of all acceptation. Permit me to remind you of this briefly by proving to you from the Scripture how this acceptation enables us to believe properly, to live godly, and to die happily. These are the weighty words of the Scripture, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain;

ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

Christ is risen! It is a message which really enables us to believe properly, for if Christ be not raised our faith is in vain. Beloved, if Christ is not risen, in whom do we believe? Do we believe in Him as a wise teacher, a noble man, a pious master, but after all only a man? Then upon a man we are baptized, to a man we go to church, to a man we pray, and to honor a man we celebrate the Lord's Supper, it is a man whom we accept as our model, following in His footsteps and calling Him our Saviour and Redeemer. Is this the proper faith, built upon a rock? Can a mere man save us, though he be the wisest and the best? He may be able to comfort and teach us, yet as such he cannot save us or reconcile us to God. Dare we pray to any man, though he be the noblest and the purest? We may respect such a man, love, admire, and imitate him, but worship, believe in and put our trust in him—never, no, never. If Christ is not risen, then is our faith vain.

But, blessed be God, Christ is risen; and it is this which justifies our faith. He, who was taken from the cross on Good Friday's evening, and whose body they placed in the grave, stands before the world crowned with victory as the King of glory, as the Prince of life, as the Son of the ever-living God. And now the Father's declaration, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," has been proved. Now the divine Amen has been pronounced upon the word of the Son, "It is finished." Now are His ene-

mies smitten by their own word, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will save him. For he said, I am the son of God." Now our faith is not vain. Now we know in whom we have believed. We believe in, pray to, and call ourselves after Him "whom God himself hath exalted and given a name which is above all other names, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father." True is the message and worthy of all acceptation, because it enables us to believe properly.

And it helps us to live godly. "If Christ hath not been raised, ye are yet in your sins." If Christ remained in the grave, who will then help us out of our sins, out of our sin-guiltiness, out of our sin-service? Not He, for in that case, He is Himself a poor victim of sin and not a divine expiator of sin. His blood, then, cannot cleanse us of sin, for it is only the blood of a human martyr. Then His spirit cannot deliver us from the bondage of sin, because it is not a divine, life-giving spirit. If Christ is not risen, we are yet in our sins, notwithstanding Gethsemane and Golgotha. In our sins we will continue to live as under a heavy load, and never, not even after striving for holiness, can we truly rejoice in that blessed assurance, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." In our sins we shall die, and not even the best among us can look hopefully beyond in the solemn eternity with the assurance, "Christ is here; who will condemn?" But now, blessed be God, Christ is risen, and by this faithful and acceptable word not only the

stone from the door of Christ's sepulcher is rolled away, but also the burden of sin from our conscience.

Now we have a divine expiator of our sin, whose expiatory sacrifice has been accepted of God and acknowledged by Him. Now we have a loving guide, who reaches out His strong hand to us to guide us in the path of holiness. Now we have a mighty advocate with the Father, who at His right hand makes intercession for us. Now we have a heavenly head, on whom as living members we shall continue to grow through all eternity. Now we can of a truth live godly lives.

Finally, in this faith we can die happily. "If Christ be not raised, then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." If the grave is our last limit, if annihilation is our eternal lot, then the Christian with his forebodings of heaven and thoughts of eternity, with his tender conscience and his daily crucifixion of the flesh is worse off than the careless Sadducee who says, "Let us eat and drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Then the Creator has manifested more regard for the tiny midge, which for a short day plays in the sunbeam, desiring nothing more; more regard for the butterfly, which during one short summer flies over the fields, needing nothing but a little honey; more regard for these than for man, living on through the years, thirsting for immortality.

If all who have fallen asleep in Jesus are lost; if all those faithful souls who have hopefully folded their hands in the struggle of death with the pious ejacula-

tion of Saint Stephen, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit "; if all the pious fathers and mothers, all the dear children, teachers and friends over whose graves we have comforted ourselves with the great Christian hope that their bodies will be awakened by the Lord Jesus in His own great day, having commended their spirits into the hands of the Saviour; if all these are lost, with their bodies a prey to corruption and with their spirits a victim of annihilation, what a fearful loss it is. If with all my believing and hoping, with all my struggling and suffering I can gain nothing beyond, with my body becoming food for worms and my spirit bursting like a bubble in the air, then I repeat what I said at the beginning, that our life upon earth is like a dark night upon earth with no morning-dawn to follow, a harsh dissonance with no reconciling finale.

But a glorious light shines out through our gloom. It is the light of an unshakable hope in our immortality. We live through the toils and gains and stresses of the years, reaching out to the greater, vaster, purer life in Him, who is the giver of life itself. And we die happily in the knowledge that we enter with Jesus into that larger life which strikes out beyond the grave.

" But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." O what a beautiful finale to our text. O what a faithful, precious word, worthy of all acceptation. Trusting upon it we can die happily. Now you mourners, with good cheer visit the graves of your loved ones this day and say, " Be at rest, ye mortal bodies." Now ye pilgrims all, approach your own graves and remember for your comfort that

after a short rest your bodies shall surely rise from the grave.

PRAYER

Now, exalted Saviour, most adorable head of Thy Church, we at Thy grave lift our eyes heavenward with confidence. The peace of Thy grace will surround our own graves. When tired of earth's toils, we shall lie down with the happy hope of a glorious resurrection. Thou Prince of life, who didst break asunder the bonds of the tomb, draw us through death and the grave to the home of the redeemed, where with them we shall forever sing, "Glory, hallelujah to the Lamb that has reconciled us to the Father." Amen.

MERTON S. RICE

Dr. Rice was born in the state of Kansas; and it was while he was a student at Baker University that he formed a life long friendship with the late Bishop William Alfred Quayle—a friendship which has contributed generously to his remarkable ministry. Before coming to Detroit he was minister at the First Methodist Church in Duluth, a great church in a great city. Since 1914 he has been at the Metropolitan Methodist Church in this city, where he preaches to one of the largest congregations in his denomination, worshiping in one of the finest church buildings in America. "Dust and Destiny" is the best of the several invigorating books which he has written. Whenever I hear Dr. Rice, I am bound to think of what Malcolm Spencer, a gifted young English author, says about preaching. He says, "Very often it is the poetic beauty of the phrase rather than its value as an instrument of definition, that makes it able to convey a vision of God or of goodness." That is one element in the preaching which attracts great audiences twice a Sunday to Metropolitan. It is the gift of poetic expression, which invests commonplace incidents and humble texts with infinite meaning, beauty, and strength. Wonderfully endowed with physical energy, moral earnestness, and poetic expression Dr. Rice has given an invaluable ministry to this city. Protestantism claims him as its clarion voice, crying aloud against sin and summoning every man to Christ.

WHY I STAY IN THE MINISTRY—I stay in the ministry for exactly the same reason I entered the ministry. I entered it with a conviction for a task. I remain entered in order to spend my life in getting my task done. When my very dear personal friend, William Alfred Quayle, came to die, after his eloquent tongue had been stilled and he could no longer speak, he impressively pointed with his expressive finger to the words recorded in the first book of Thessalonians in the second chapter and fourth verse; and made sign to have them hewn on the stone that marks his grave, "Allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel." That, too, is my inspiration in this task. It means more to me now than ever before; but my whole purpose in the ministry may be expressed in those words of divine entrustment. I dare not falter here.

—M. S. Rice.

XIV

BROOK AND BARREL

MERTON S. RICE, D.D.
Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church

"And it came to pass after awhile, that the brook dried up."
—I KINGS 17:7.
"And the barrel of meal wasted not."—I KINGS 17:16.

There is so much more in the Bible than what is written there. It constantly confounds me with its overplus of meaning. Simple phrases that are recorded in inconspicuous manner run far in influence and interpretation along the ways of life.

I have taken to text for this sermon two phrases, each torn from a verse, descriptive in contrast of situations attendant upon one of the very interesting incidents of the Old Testament. In the sweep of the general narrative here, the detailed meanings of such phrases as I have chosen to pause before are easily lost. We get interested in the great story of a drouth, and hurry on the rain of deliverance; and in our rush with the general story we trample over in carelessness the finest things attendant. The drouth is not the important matter here. The people in the drouth are the main issue.

This chapter begins with a brook and ends with a barrel. The brook failed; the barrel never wasted.

Elijah, by divine direction, had hidden himself from the fast increasing suffering, attendant upon a serious drouth, over beside a lovely little refreshing brook bearing a refreshing name, Cherith. There was a strange satisfaction that came over the endowed prophet as he stretched himself in the cooling grass that was growing close beside the assuring brook. As the drouth increased its hot encroachment over the land, Elijah all alone, save for the winged servants that brought his scant but sufficient meals, became so used to the brook's contribution that it became a part of the expected experience. It was there when he came. He came because it was there. There was no thought but that the brook was permanent.

Suddenly, in the midst of the narrative as it seemed inclined to an easy satisfaction, there is written in this verse of our text, "And it came to pass after awhile that the brook dried up." It carries the crack of a whip of compulsion, suddenly appearing in a scene of endowed comfort. This man, long hidden and cared for, was forced to move out. His orders were even as strange as his disappointment was. He was sent over to a heathen city, and even to a poor heathen widow woman, who with her son had barely been able thus far, amid the general suffering, to keep soul and body together. He found her making ready the mixing of the very last handful of meal she possessed; and dared ask her to share her food even in desperation with a stranger. It surprised her. She sought to explain the seriousness of the request; but was finally persuaded, believing doubtless that nothing but starvation was

before them all, and it was little choice to starve by the quicker route of a few bites less in the final meal. It must have seemed strange to this wanderer, who had just faced away from Cherith because it dried up, to speak as though with authority, that though the brook failed the barrel could not waste. But so he spake; and so it happened in Zerephath.

My interest here now lies in this significant contrast—the brook dried up; the meal barrel wasted not. What is the basis of this contrast? The dry brook and the unfailing barrel.

One of the most interesting rides it has ever been my privilege to take is along that winding road from Jerusalem to Jericho. It is interesting because of compelled memories that attend the way. The scenery is by comparison scant; but the remembrances are impressive. The Jericho road! I saw the thieves there still, but not active. The Good Samaritan I did not notice; but at least missed him in response to the great story our Lord wrote along that way, and got it out to the world.

When we had accomplished a bit more than half of the journey and were almost ready to begin the last real steep descent leading from the hills down into the Jordan Valley, the old sheik of a fellow, who was professing to be a guide, stopped the rig in which we rode; and we stepped out and walked only a few steps to the easy crest of a little ambling hillock, beyond which we had not been able to see from our passing carriage. The suddenly disclosed view was easily the most impressive we had enjoyed along the way. Just beside

our roadway, but impossible to be seen from it because of the natural concealment of the rising ridge, lay a wonderful ravine, almost possessing proportions of a canyon. A great precipitous gorge. It is called Wady Kelt. As we stood gazing into it with the mere interest of scenery, that interest was suddenly enlarged by some information that transformed mere landscape into significant association.

"This is the brook, Cherith, where Elijah was fed by the ravens." The sentence was spoken in that artificial manner known only to guides who learn their sentences, and speak them like bits of animated machinery might speak. But the words surely did awaken my interest. The old dust-blown hills along the toiling way had all been so dry. That is a dry, dead-looking country even when there is no drouth around to emphasize it. We had felt sorry for a few sheep and goats we had seen hunting pasturage along almost bare hillsides. Some wearied-looking camels of a caravan we had seen resting beside the way and smelling about dried little ditches for a few mouthfuls of dead grass.

It was all magnified now by memory that came painting all this in terms of a terrible drouth. As I looked over the precipitous edge to see far below me in the gracefully marked bottom of it all, a lovely green line of vegetation just clinging affectionately to the tracings of a tiny stream of water that sprang from a hillside spring, the commentary of the guide's words was at hand. Whether or no the spot was exact in its location was of little concern to me. Such little matters as that are soon dismissed by folks who depend

upon professional guides. I turned to my Baedeker; and all it said was one of those famous observations written in cold language, "This is not the correct place." It said nothing whatever as to where the correct place might be. Critics can spoil anything. Analyzers will wreck sentiment. I almost threw the book over the precipice had I not remembered the brother from India who broke the microscope for what it showed him of his sacred river. So I hunted the words of more critics. They told me the ravens spoken of in the Bible were not birds; and that Elijah had been helped in his need for food by a tribe living there who were called ravens by name. Then I found a comment about some old hermit who did actually live by the side of that little creek, subsisting upon four raisins a day until he died. I do not know how soon he died. I do know that anyone anywhere can live upon four raisins a day until death arrives. In fact, one could subsist on one raisin a week until he died.

I put the comments of the guide books back into my pocket, and asked the old guide, whose words remained ever the same, to say it again, while I looked steadfastly into the chasm. Far below me and on the opposite bluff, I could see an old monastery named after St. George. It clings there like some great mud-swallow's nest, but has been built as a place of confinement for troublous priests, a veritable ecclesiastical penitentiary. I could tell by the well-worn path which toiled a hard way up to it that they were depending there on folks rather than birds to bring food to them.

But, right or wrong on mere geography, it was an im-

pressive place to stand, looking down into such scenery as Wady Kelt affords and thinking of Elijah, the prophet. And while I stood looking, I confess boldly that it did not harm my thoughts any when I saw, winging their way along that canyon's route, three or four old cawing crows. The Scripture insisted on memory.

" Get thee hence, and turn eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith which is before Jordan. And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee."

" So he went, and did according unto the word of the Lord; for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh in the evening. And he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after awhile that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land."

Thus the Bible graphically describes the story, which turns at once to Zerephath, and brings attention to the meal barrel that refused to waste. The contrast is what attracts my attention now. The brook dried up; the meal barrel wasted not. Why?

The brook named Cherith was a good place to hide and train Elijah. Cherith means separated. It is an essential training in religion. The prophet was sent out there alone in preparation. Not that such separation is an object worthy. That was the mistake made by the monk. He went off alone just to be holy by himself. That is no way to be holy. It would be useless holiness, even if it could be had so. Savanarola

lived through a period when Paul's description of the adversaries of the true faith was perfectly worked out: "World rulers of this darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places." What wonder, then, that a man such as was Savanarola, of the finest moral sense and deepest spiritual convictions, was driven across the mountains to Florence by a war wielded by the merciless hand of an arrogant, ambitious Pope, who actually died of rage because of the conclusion of peace. What wonder that Savanarola did hide for a while in a cell. I was glad to step into his old cell one day, and seat myself in the hard old chair he used. But the great meaning beyond that cell of his there was that he never went there as a place for him to stay. He came forth with a blazing soul, aflame with convictions to destroy forever the hated sin from which he had fled. There on the walls of that old cell today, in a glass case, hang a few old charred sticks of wood that have borrowed a never-dying interest from the fact that they were part of the pyre that burned him yonder in the Piazza della Signoria, because he insisted in coming forth from that cell.

Never mind the cell unless from it you come forth. That is, after all, the strange fascination to my thought at Cherith with Elijah. Seclusion is no place for a real life to be spent. You have no right to hide away unless you expect there to make ready to come forth. "And the brook dried up." That brought him out. As long as the brook ran refreshingly to him, he stayed at Cherith. The brook ought to dry up at the door of every hiding-place of real human helpfulness. As long

as Elijah could be fed in Cherith he never even knew there was a widow woman with a poor son about to starve to death, to whom his coming meant salvation. That dried-up brook drove the thirsty, hungry prophet out of Cherith and selfish separation up to Zerephath to find a desperation wherein he could be of help, as well as to discover his own salvation. It has always been, and even now it is strangely so, that dried brooks and meal barrels that waste not have a strange connection.

Out of Cherith to Zerephath! Let me ask now for the location of contentment. See Elijah alone in his secreted place. There he lies in comfortable confidence stretched out on the green grass that grew beside a trickling stream in the midst of the drouth-dried land. Every morning and every evening the winged breakfast and the winged supper. "Surely here is contentment; I am secure," says he. "No man sees me; I see nobody. I eat my own meals. I drink from my brook."

A reasonable amount of that might do, perhaps, if some one could surely decide on reasonableness. But, after all, when it comes to genuine satisfaction in life, a real man had rather starve among others to whom he could really be a companion and a helper, than keep himself fat and even comfortable all alone in self-centered indulgence. I imagine the most despised and disgusting character our period of history has generated will prove to be, when we get far enough to see the real perspective of history, that craven, fear-struck, selfish Kaiser, who ran away from the results his

country and people had to stand, and hid himself in a little Dutch Cherith in a castle beside a canal. Wait till that brook dries up.

I can see Elijah that dry, dry day wandering along the parched, dried bed of that long refreshing brook, turning over the hot, sun-baked rocks that only yesterday were wet and cool. The stream has actually failed.

There is so much so-called faith demanding a full stream. There is a challenge to the man who has to stand on the edge of a dry brook. It is my purpose now to hunt out a few specific lessons here to witness the advance at once from a brook that fails to a meal barrel that does not waste. It was God's purpose, then, and He proposes no less now for every one of us, that a hidden servant was wrong. Faith in God is not a condition to be hidden in some secret canyon as a personal security policy. It is rather an endowment to carry into the midst of life to sustain need with. The great ministry of religion is not to endow indulgence with a divine security. If this were the case, every canyon would be occupied. Indulgent Elijahs would be stretched out beside every available stream.

Religion has always suffered at this point. God has been compelled to dry up many a brook to save His people. Elijah became self-centered while the brook ran full. He sent no invitations to famishing folks to come and drink at his good brook. He would have forgotten other folks absolutely, had the brook ran on. When he got in trouble, then he thought of others. "My brook is dry!" I wonder if he had been eager

to share his brook with others, would it have failed? That is the exact point of my contrasting interest in the unwasting meal barrel. It was all but gone. One more meal and it would have been done. The dear little old mother and her underfed boy were out getting sticks to cook the very last handful of meal they could scrape from the bottom of that wasting barrel. Now comes an outsider. Someone else asks for a share. "Give me to eat!" "Who are you?", asks the surprised woman. "I am the man who has been hiding out here beside Cherith. It was a lovely brook. No one else knew about it. I lay myself down beside it, and drank to my fill." "Did you ever invite any thirsty folks over to drink with you?" "No, I never did. I was hidden; and I was never sure what sort of an outcome was ahead of me, so I drank of my own brook. But yesterday it dried up."

"Oh," said the wondering old woman, "did your brook go dry?" "Yes," said the worn and weary prophet, "and I had to leave there." "But why do you come now to beg of me, a poor, ill-fed woman with a poor, ill-fed boy, asking me to share with you the very last and sparse meal we have left? There is really not enough for one, and but a poor satisfaction for the two of us, while for three the very idea is foolishness." But the man, who by himself had seen the brook go dry, now insisted that they share with him and see a strange plenty. His insistence won: and the meal barrel wasted not.

From that dry brook to that unwasting barrel is a wonderful distance in religious meaning. God can't

build Him great and helpful prophets hidden away to live in a selfish comfort. What the world has to suffer, God's people must know. What pangs are stricken into the souls of the world, must also strike their meaning into the prophet's life. A big, successful business man, whose wealth seemed to insure his own chosen conduct, and make possible any manner of life he cared to live, said to me one day, "I haven't been in ten people's homes in ten years." His Cherith was running full. He didn't care. He was a good sort of a man, too. He knew life all the way from poverty to plenty. As a healthy young lad at his father's death, he found himself compelled to join his brother's hands in the dark, dirty job of a coal mine, to help make a living for a large family of children. So when at last he did get where ease and plenty were his, it would seem he knew life all the way along. But his memory was not good. Cherith sang in his ears. When he died there was still plenty in the stream; and he died alone there in its seeming comforts. God don't always stop Cherith. Sometimes a lonesome life is brought to a lonesome death beside a sheltered and secluded place. The mastery of the unfailing stream of plenty is a hard task. Not because our great God is impatient with His children, but rather because He wants His people never to forget others does He sometimes stop Cherith; and the brook dries up.

Elijah had been an exceptional man. That is dangerous for a religionist. That is the very thing the Jewish race as a whole faltered over. That is the liable rock that is before them still. They were developed

as a race in a strange manner, and under the special watch-care of God. Their Cherith was secure. They had escaped Egypt. They were miraculously led all the way. Rivers, seas, deserts, wildernesses, all were mastered by the all-powerful hand for them. The Jew has been beside Cherith. God may have to dry that brook before him yet. If he persists in his own proud aloofness, it may be necessary that his stream shall fail. Careful, now, for we are very close to the most tender facts of our contacts with providence. I heard a heart-broken man, in the midst of unexpected loss, cry out. A little competence in which he had placed his confidence had suddenly ceased. He tried to solve his difficulty wrongly. He said, "I haven't been a bad man. If I had been so, I could take this. I have tried to serve God. I have always tried to do so. This is too much for me to bear." It was the echo of that ancient struggle. The devil tried hard to get a prejudiced position in his claim that Job was a good man because of what he got out of life. "Does Job fear God for nought?" You have hedged him about. He serves for pay. Cherith attracts. That is dangerous talk. Cherith would buy allegiance. But let that brook dry up; and then take note.

That is the fine lesson that comes creeping out from that drying day and the failing stream. Elijah had to come out. He came out among others who were in trouble. Suffering was running down every road. Cheriths were dry everywhere. He was one among many. So, stopping before a desolate home wrapped in real distress, he had full chance to catch the great

truth. He looked there into an all but empty meal barrel. The real self of the long-hidden prophet at once became visible again. He never was designed for ease. He was no sort of a man to send off to an easy place in which to sleep his life away. At once when he glanced into that gaunt barrel, even just from a failing brook, the faith of the prophet was challenged; and he spoke bravely. "Don't fear; this meal shall not waste; nor shall the cruse of oil fail." That refreshes me. Here is the new recovered man of God. Elijah never lost faith. Before this new test he draws his fearless conclusions. The very same God who had allowed the brook to dry up was now ready to open a new bounty in a meal barrel, and in a heathen city.

There was far-reaching meaning in all this. Even across long centuries it would echo. When critical Jews sought to persecute Jesus with questions about His conduct, He said with keen memory, "Were there no widows in Israel, that Elijah must be sent to a poor heathen?" Elijah, the Jew, a gracious and bounteous guest in a heathen widow woman's home! It would be impossible for me to over-emphasize that fact in this day of ours. God got closer to Elijah, and through Elijah found a new and more intimate way into a whole world's heart, after He compelled him to come away from Cherith, and brought him to a poor woman's home to replenish with unfailing assurance the little she knew she had.

The unwasting meal barrel with others is of far richer significance than the hidden brook alone. Some one has said, I wish I knew to whom I should give

credit, "There is no blackboard demonstration that God is good; you must risk it or die a coward."

PRAYER

Oh Christ, for whom we have been speaking now, help us to bring on down to our day and place the worked out meaning of the brook and barrel of long, long ago. We would not selfishly consume Thy gracious benefits. We would share every richness with which Thou doest entrust us. Through us, do Thou get applied meaning for those things amid which we are privileged to live and work. Amen.

Bishop Rogers was born in Allentown, New Jersey, in 1877, was graduated from the University of Michigan in 1907, from Union Theological Seminary in 1911, and from the General Theological Seminary in 1912. Bishop Williams ordained him Priest in 1911, and he entered upon his life work as assistant in St. Joseph's in Detroit. Later he became assistant rector of Calvary in Pittsburgh and still later he was made rector of St. John's in Jersey City. While at St. John's he was appointed chaplain and served in this capacity through the war. In 1920 he came to St. Paul's Cathedral in Detroit, where he had been Dean for the past five years. His labors in behalf of his church and the city have been indefatigable, holding in the church such important positions as Chaplain of St. Luke's Home, Secretary of the Standing Committee on the Michigan Diocese, and membership on the Board of Bishops, and in the city, invaluable relations to many religious and civic groups. In respect to the latter, his most notable contribution was made while he acted as President of the local Council of Churches. He is the author of "Occasional Sermons," a book full of vital and original thinking. While at St. Paul's he has had opportunity to broadcast his remarkable voice by means of the radio to the great delight and comfort of many thousands in and out of Detroit. Quite recently he has been consecrated Bishop in his church, and is now stationed in Ohio as Bishop Coadjutor of the Ohio Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We are sorry to lose him.

DEEP CALLING UNTO DEEP—Some there are who always know they are to be ministers. They grow up with that consciousness. There is only one love of their lives—a consuming passion admitting of no alternative.

At times they wander afar in other fields, in business, in professions, in various occupations; but there is only one vocation.

The ministry consumes all interests; it merges all occupations; it claims all gifts. It draws them as a magnet so powerful that they never know any other real pull in life.

They do not have to choose, for it is all settled. No sacrifice seems unnecessary, no training is long, no duties are irksome. They accept all challenges. They strive to the uttermost. They simply will be His ministers. It is the dominate passion of their souls. It is life—their life.

I quite understand them; we are kinsmen.

—WARREN LINCOLN ROGERS.

XV

BEHOLD, THE SOWER

WARREN LINCOLN ROGERS, D.D.

"Behold, the sower went forth to sow."—MATT. 13:3.

We have certain days in the church year for which we offer special petitions, and we frequently indicate them by very unfamiliar names. Such are the Rogation seasons, as we call them. We have Rogation Days and Rogation Prayers. Few people know what is meant by them, although the meaning is very simple. Let me give one meaning in a single phrase: "God bless the husbandman, and the fields of the earth that they give their increase." In other words, it is a prayer for the farmer.

This is altogether appropriate at this season of the year when the farmers of the country are busy preparing the ground for the sowing of the seed. Especially is this so when the season has been so unpropitious as we have experienced this spring, when extremely cold weather has been followed by excessively hot weather. Two farmer friends have informed me that they have lost strawberry and tomato crops because of this condition. Our newspapers reported this week that millions of dollars' worth of crops have perished. So we give more than ordinary attention to

these rogation prayers today in the service of our church.

My sermon concerns the farmer, and for a text you recall the parable of our Lord in St. Matthew's Gospel, the thirteenth chapter and the third verse, "Behold, the sower went forth to sow."

It is not because any of us are farmers that we choose this theme. In fact, most of us never had anything to do with the farm, although we may have been born on a farm and lived there for a time. Such was my own case. Yet the pity is that I never stayed long enough on the farm to learn anything valuable about it, nor could I be of any help in maintaining a farm. Some two years ago a man offered me a finely-stocked and well-cultivated farm of nearly five hundred acres; and I had to say to him, "No, thank you, I cannot accept the offer." What a miserable failure I should have made trying to be a farmer.

Most of us are interested in almost everything else except the farm and the farmer. Possibly it is good for us to center our thought on things other than those we habitually deal with every day of the week. We have to do with business affairs, with the home and school, the counting-house and store, the mill and the factory. How refreshing to think of something else. It reminds us of the dream which so many of us have of how we shall spend our maturer years in some comfortable, delightful place in the country near the city, but not a part of it. The present trend in the city is toward the country, that is, to certain conditions and pleasures of country life. Our suburban populations

are growing with amazing rapidity and are a reflection of our desire to live somewhat removed from the busy and congested activities of our American life.

Our Lord talked most of the time with city folks, with the people from the fishing villages and the little towns of Galilee, from the large city centers and the metropolis of Jerusalem. Yet you will note that the greater part of His parables were taken from country life; they had to do with the farm and the farmer.

I like this parable of the farmer, "Behold, the sower." As Jesus gave it, He undoubtedly had in mind the soils into which the seed was cast, rather than the sower himself. We have called it the parable of the sower, while our Lord thought mostly of the soils and of the various receptions which the seed received. We shall disregard this application, and keep to the traditional name of the parable, that of the Sower. So our theme is, The Sower.

We are thinking of the man, the sower. The sower is always more important than the soils. The farmer is of greater value than the farm. Men do not always think this way. They try to reverse the order, and imagine that it is possible to get farmers at any time, but not so easy to get farms. The reason that I declined the offer of my friend was because I could not run that farm, nor could I find anyone else capable of doing it, so that we could make a profit on it. And the reason my friend offered the farm was because he could not find a farmer who could maintain the farm with profit to himself, while he was in the city making a lot more money than he could hope to make on the farm.

He was learning that the farmer is of the first importance. No farm will keep up without the services of an expert and industrious farmer. The best farm will soon deteriorate without good management. The best farms have become such because there were good farmers.

In like manner, the man is always of more value than his machine. We have a way of thinking in this industrial age that men do not count and that machines are everything. Some machines do seem to be almost human in their wonderful powers. We stand in awe of them as we see them with their artificial arms and limbs undertaking tasks which no human strength could possibly achieve. Yet it is exceedingly dangerous for any age or nation to accept the philosophy that the machine is more valuable than the man.

Any nation which commits itself to that proposition is sure to go on the rocks. History is full of illustrations of such attempts, and of the ultimate failures which ensued.

Personality is of greater value than any institution. We laud the institutions which have come down from the past, and we think that they have life and power in and of themselves. There are some fine institutions in this fair country of ours. We speak proudly of our republican forms of government and of the institutions which have grown out of our experience in the last century and a half. We think our government is ideal; and on the Fourth of July we glorify its institutions and regard them as the last word in popular government. They are ideals. They cannot perish. Yet

every little while some one suggests a weakness and a flaw. Dean Inge, of St. Paul's Cathedral, the " gloomy dean " of London, England, very rightly criticizes our institutions and unerringly points out their weaknesses. At first we are indignant with him; but when we are sober and in our right minds, we know that he is right. We have learned that no institution of government can long maintain its high standard and ideal influence unless we have strong and righteous personalities controlling it. Free government demands an intelligent and self-sacrificing citizenry. The personality of its leaders and its people is far more important than any form it may create.

It is the same with the Church. We have inherited wonderful institutions from the past. They have come down to us, planted by Divine Grace and nourished with the blood of many martyrs. They are full of meaning and influence. And yet, of what avail are all these forms, ceremonies, traditions, institutions, and creeds, if the personality of the Divine Son of God is not in them? How foolish many things are, if His spirit cannot operate in and through them? What are the sacraments, if the incarnate Son of God is not in them? The personality of Christ must dominate them all—all of these institutions which constitute the Church in its multiform operations in the world—else most that we have and do is meaningless and powerless. Nothing we have can possibly be a substitute for the personality of our Lord.

Yes, the farmer is of more value than his farm.

The man is of more value than his machine.

Personality is of more value than any institution.

Behold, the sower; he is of more value than the soils.

Now, this parable of our Lord is the most pessimistic He ever gave. Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and some seed fell by the wayside, and it was trodden under foot of man, or the fowls of the air devoured it—waste effort. Some fell upon stony places and the sun scorched it and it died—waste effort. Some fell among thorns and they choked it—waste effort. Three times this farmer sowed, and three times he failed. Why continue? Our efforts are frequently futile. One of the hardest lessons we have to learn is that much which we have to do seems to come to naught. I well remember the fine dreams we students had in college and seminary. We were sure that we had the most unusual group of young men and that the combined results of our efforts when we were all in the ministry would achieve great reforms and advancement in the Church. As I look back over the intervening years, it is a matter of great disappointment to me to see how little we have really accomplished. Worst of all, there are some of the number who have become heartily discouraged and have abandoned the ministry.

John Oxenham tried to teach us the value of such reverses and failures in life, especially during the dark days of the war, when he wrote:

> *"In these dread times,*
> *Each day we pass unscathed*
> *Is one day snatched from sorrow.*
> *Help us to live full-faithed,*
> *Nor stoop to borrow*

From a possible tomorrow
That which may never be;
But, if it be,
If still ordained of Thee, that we
May learn to rise
Through sacrifice
To nobler ministry."

How different is the tone of that verse from what Shelley gives in his pathetic lament,

"I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care,
Which I have borne and yet must bear."

There are failures in life. There are waste efforts which come to no avail. There are children who never know what loving self-sacrificing parents have given all their lives. I saw such a son only recently when his parents came to the college where he had gotten in trouble, and with aching hearts they tried to help him along. There are homes which are completely wrecked, and businesses which are only a mass of ruins, crumbled about us. God does not promise us success in all of our ventures or dreams. Otherwise the book of Job was written in vain. There is something more important than success, something more worth seeking after than just our own whim or fancy, no matter how great or useful it may be. It is the sense of peace and contentment in our own souls and the consciousness that we have labored worthily.

Success or failure are not the final measure. H. G. Wells has suggested a deeper appreciation of life when he sums up a most interesting argument by saying,

"Yet, in the background of the consciousness of the world, waiting as the silence and moonlight wait above the flares and shouts, the hurdy-gurdys and quarrels of a village fair, is the knowledge that all mankind is one brotherhood; that God is the universal and impartial Father of mankind; and that only in that universal service may mankind find peace, or peace be found for the troubles of the individual soul."

Behold, the sower,—three efforts and all failures. But he did not stop there. That is the best part of the parable. You will recall that great painting of Millet, the French artist, as he describes the sower, with strident pace and enthusiastic manner, putting his hand into the bag of seed he carries, and casting the seed ungrudgingly in every direction, letting it fall where it will. Some one has called this parable an illustration of Human Imbecility, of foolish and senseless social effort which deserves to fail. Why sow seed among thorns or on the wayside or on stony ground? Of course, no harvest can come from seed sown in a stone quarry, or on the Lincoln Highway. We are told that much of our efforts in social and spiritual betterment are of a similar imbecile nature. No one pleads for brainless labor. We assuredly magnify the necessary common sense that everyone should exercise. God gave us brains to use and the experience of the human race for the past centuries to guide us in all of our work. But we have known of men who spent all their time studying the soils and the weather conditions, and reading reports and treatises on how and when to sow the seed, and then have neither cour-

age nor time to sow. We greatly admire those sturdy farmers in Montana who, five years ago, faced drought, and four years ago endured cold, and three years ago suffered the heat, and two years ago saw two hundred of their banks fail, and yet this year, when I talked with some of them as to whether they would still farm, immediately answered, "Surely we shall sow the seed this spring and labor as never before with all of our brains and strength for the harvest. We are not quitting." This is in accord with the dominant spirit of Carlyle as he trenchantly urges, "Produce, Produce. Were it but the pitifulest infinitesimal fraction of a product, produce it in God's name. It is the utmost thou hast in thee; out with it, then." Elizabeth Barrett Browning, more modest yet none the less determined, reveals her spirit in writing,

"I stood up straight and worked
My veritable work. And as the soul
Which grows within the child makes the child grow,
So life, in deepening with me, deepened all
The course I took, the work I did."

Behold, the sower went forth to sow. He did what he intended to do. He sowed the seed with a holy abandon as if every seed were good and every seed would assure a harvest. I like this parable of the sower. It has faith and hope and work and power to it. It manifests the only spirit which in the end must achieve its purpose. Some one answers the question: "Why were the saints, saints? Because they were cheerful when it was difficult to be cheerful, patient when it was difficult to be patient; and because they

pushed on when they wanted to stand still, and kept silent when they wanted to talk, and were agreeable when they wanted to be disagreeable. That was all. It was quite simple and always will be." Behold, the sower went forth to sow. That was his job, and he did it. It was God's business to bring in the harvest.

But this parable also suggests one of the finest optimism we can find in our Lord's parables. Some seed fell on good ground. And it bare fruit,—two per cent as we think of in our Government bonds, or four per cent as some of our banks pay on savings deposits, or six per cent as we collect on mortgages, or even ten per cent as we desire in the nature of dividends on our investments? No, the minimum stated is thirty per cent, then sixty per cent, and some even a hundred per cent. I often wonder how successful a business man our Lord would be. There is a real question which gives us difficulty at times, *i. e.*, how far can we put our Lord's teachings into our business affairs. I do not know. But it is worth while to try, at least. Jesus is amazingly optimistic of life and in life. He expresses unquenchable faith, indomitable, eternal.

John Mills pays a lovely tribute to his friend, John Clifford, in his poem called " A Memory."

" My life grew weary, and, with toil, my spirit broke;
I met a man I knew, and when he spoke
I seemed to see the Master; heard him speak
His message to the weary, and the weak.
And now I catch his name—the man who made me think—
Till sunlight on the field touched every clod,
And helped me know I lived and worked with God."

The religion we profess is not a mere human impulse.

It is not an idle dream or a sentimental vanity. We are not whistling to keep up our courage. When we are confronted with the long, hard tasks of dealing with masses of men in the midst of their well-nigh unanswerable problems, their conflicting prejudices, their inexplicable blindnesses, and their unpardonable sins, there is need for the highest courage; a courage which can go forth in the name and spirit of the Master to seek and to save that which seems undeniably lost and ruined. A spiritual dynamic of unusual power is imperative. It can be found only in this well-poised and unfailing optimism of Jesus. Work with God can never fail. We dare to trust our allies. As the farmer trusts the kindly earth, the beneficent sun, the physical forces and energies of the universe; as he had confidence in the rain and the dew, the sun and the soil; so we, in our tasks of life, have infinite faith in the spiritual forces and energies of life. From them we receive our strength and the assurance of the harvest.

And so it is that our strength shall be largely multiplied and the harvest shall be greatly increased because we have the wisdom and the blessing of our great God to attend us in every way of life.

After all, the question which is raised in this parable is this, What kind of a sower are we? We worry about the soils and the conditions when we should be most concerned as to how we are ourselves. It is not the farm, but the farmer. What kind of a sower are we? What kind of a citizen? What kind of a churchman?

What kind of a parent? What kind of a brother? Behold, the sower went forth to sow. Not the soils, but the sower.

PRAYER

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that with high courage and indomitable faith we may sow the seed of truth and eternal life, believing in its ultimate achievement, according to Thy Divine purposes. May we trust our Allies and labor with all our heart, mind and strength. In Thine own good time give the harvest; and while we toil, sustain our spirits and grant us sweet contentment and a quiet mind, with the blessed consciousness of work well done and a life not lived in vain. Amen.

MARK F. SANBORN

Dr. Sanborn was born in Michigan in the year 1877, and received his college training at Kalamazoo and his theological training at Chicago, being graduated from Kalamazoo College in 1905 and from the Divinity School of Chicago University in 1909. His pastorates have been as follows: Underwood Memorial Baptist Church, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin; Berwyn Baptist Church, Berwyn, Illinois; Judson Memorial Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and the First Baptist Church, Detroit, where he has been preaching since 1922. For the past three years he has been the popular president of the Baptist Young People's Union of America, and has given excellent service in the many summer Assemblies and Conventions held by this great organization of youth. There is no greater privilege afforded a Christian minister than that of instructing and inspiring the young people, and Dr. Sanborn is accomplishing this high task among his own congregation and in the wider field opened to him through the Baptist Union. His great church is situated on Woodward Avenue and is one of the Baptist meccas for Michigan. There is a real place for "teaching sermons" in this day when so few people have any reason for the faith that is within them. This sermon is of the right sort; and it gives emphasis to that particular kind of thinking which ought to bring a larger appreciation of the values of human life.

THE YOUTH FOR CHRIST—Bishop John H. Vincent has wisely said, "The church that is wise toward its youth will shine as the stars." The minister who appreciates the importance of work with young people will make a distinct contribution to the advancement of the Kingdom.

The youth of today will lead the world of tomorrow. The direction of that leadership can be largely determined by the wise men in the pulpits. The church needs the vision, the love of adventure, the courage and enthusiasm of youth. Our youth need the ministry, the sympathy, the training and the opportunities for service in the church.

The wise preacher can lead these two great forces into happy union that will add much strength to the program of the Christian religion. There is no more promising field of endeavor today than that offered by the eager, responsive young people of our generation. Win the youth of the world to Christ and the Kingdom will come.

—Mark F. Sanborn.

XVI

THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW HIM

MARK F. SANBORN, D.D.
First Baptist Church

"*That thy might know Thee, the only true God.*"—JOHN 17:3.

The seventeenth chapter of St. John is the Holy of Holies of the Bible. In reading this chapter one is reminded of the experience of Moses in the mount when God said "put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Into this high-priestly prayer our Lord puts the inmost thoughts of his soul. He leads us into the very presence of God. He makes known His supreme mission in life. It was to lead men to know God, to know Him as Father, as the God of love and mercy, and to know Him as He is revealed in His Son. Thus to know God is to have eternal life.

Man's greatest need is to know God. Until a man knows God he has not begun to live. He may have much knowledge, may have achieved great success, may have accumulated a great fortune, or even worn a crown; but if he does not know God, he has never entered into the true life of high purposes and challenging aspirations that make us worthy of our divine birthright.

When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, he

became conscious of his sinfulness, repented and responded to God's call by saying, "Here am I, send me."

The Book of Job has one of the greatest messages of the Bible for our time. You recall how Job lost his property, his sons and daughters, and then disease seized his body. In a discouraged and distracted condition Job found his way to the garbage heap outside the city walls. Hither his friends came, three of them, with their traditional theology, their emphasis upon certain dogmas of the past, inferring that Job must have sinned and that this suffering was God's just punishment.

Elihu, the younger friend, a man of more liberal ideas, next presented his newer interpretation of theology. But traditional orthodoxy, hoary dogmas, or even modern philosophy didn't help Job out of his troubles. And similar debates, statements of creeds and hollow repetitions of outgrown traditions will not save the distracted world of our day.

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

In a way Job represents our world. The great war swept away the material possessions of many nations. Statisticians tell us no less than thirty millions of human beings, mostly our sons and daughters, lost their lives in the war and since the war, because of the war. Today the world is distracted. Jealousy, fear

and lawlessness everywhere abound. Like the friends of Job, the fundamentalists and modernists of our day are offering their suggestions, but the world still suffers.

What this troubled, distracted world needs is to know God. As you read the last few chapters of the Book of Job, you will find that when God is revealed to Job, everything is made right in his life. His property is restored double, more sons and daughters are born to him and he is restored to perfect health and happiness.

Man can never be satisfied until he thus knows God. St. Augustine was right when he said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself and we cannot rest until we rest in Thee." When Paul preached at Athens he told the Greeks that men are the offspring of God, who "made of one every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth, . . . that they should seek God if haply they might feel after him and find him." Man is by nature religious. Go where you will, among the most primitive and backward peoples, and you will find some form of religion. Man craves the knowledge of God. Millions are saying, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come to His seat!"

Thank God, it is possible for all to know Him. In a thousand ways He seeks to make Himself known to His children. The universe is His autobiography. The heavens declare the knowledge of God. Some people in these days seem to fear science. But every day men who really study the laws of nature and all

the wonders and glories of our material universe are being enriched by an ever-expanding knowledge of God. The study of astronomy has given us a vastly greater conception of God. As we grasp the infinite immensity of the universe, the omnipotence of God becomes evident. The study of the laws of development and growth in biology and geology gives us new and greater knowledge of God as an all-wise Creator.

The study of psychology has revealed the reality and power of faith. Our new knowledge of ancient languages, records and literatures has opened to our generation great vistas of new knowledge of God's self-revelation.

There is nothing to fear from the study of science. Through it multitudes have been led to a real, vital faith in God. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." All truth, if it is sought in reverence, will lead to the knowledge of God. The teacher in the public school, in the college or university has a golden opportunity of leading the eager young minds of the students into the knowledge of God. Leave God out of science and there is nothing left but the shell. If our hearts are in tune with the Infinite, all true knowledge will reveal God. Mrs. Browning said:

> *"Earth's crammed with heaven,*
> *And every common bush afire with God:*
> *But only he who sees, takes off his shoes."*

All new knowledge of God should be welcomed. God is the great, unchangeable reality. But men

change. Modern science and modern means of transportation have given us a new world. And yet the world is the same. It is our knowledge and experience that have changed. A thousand years ago men knew only a flat earth, that revolves on its axis. Has the earth changed? No. We have changed; our knowledge and experience have changed.

So in the realm of theology. Each generation gains new means of Bible study and new knowledge and experience of God. The old realities of religion are unchanging and unchangeable. The modern historical method of Bible study and the modern scientific means and methods of increasing knowledge are our allies, not our enemies. They have been given to us "that we might know Him."

But the supreme revelation of God is given us through His Son, our Jesus Christ. He said, "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me." His supreme mission in life was to make God known. In this prayer, He pleads for a glorified life that He may glorify the Father. As followers of our Lord, we, too, must pray for a glorified life that we may glorify Him. This glorified life comes as we reflect like a mirror the character of God, until we become transformed into the same image, and then we, too, will be able to say "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Again Jesus said in this wonderful prayer, "I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world." To manifest is to make plain to sight or understanding, to show clearly or distinctly,

to make obvious, to display, to exhibit. It is as though the Master said, " Father, I have sought to display in My life Your characteristics, in order that men who see Me might see and know You."

To manifest is more than to preach or to teach. It is to exemplify God, to show Him in our daily living. Christian workers can learn from salesmen or window decorators. How attractively the goods are displayed where people will see them and desire them. So we who are ambassadors of God, to whom has been committed the ministry of reconciliation, we who are sent " even as he was sent," are to display in our daily lives the character of God. We are to let our light shine that men may see our clean lives and our good works and come to know and glorify God.

Religious education, as a means of making God known, is one of the chief functions of the Christian Church. Boys and girls, men and women must be led to know God. We need preaching, we need evangelism, we need social service, but today our supreme need is a new emphasis on teaching. The great commission that says " Go preach the gospel to every creature," also says, " Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

Our Lord emphasized teaching, both by precept and example. In the Gospels He is referred to as " teacher " over fifty times. He Himself accepted the name when He said, " Ye call me Teacher and Lord and ye say well, for so I am."

Professor A. B. Bruce, in a large volume on *The Training of the Twelve,* calls our attention to the fact

that most of Christ's public ministry was devoted to the training of the men who were to carry on His mission, were to preach the Gospel to all men that they might know God, teaching them to observe all His commands. Jesus was a good example of the wisdom shown by Paul's advice to Timothy when he says, "The things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."

The common people with whom Jesus mingled nearly always addressed Him as Rabbi, or Teacher. Even the Pharisees said, "Rabbi, we know that thou teachest the way of God in truth." When the multitudes heard Him they said, "What is this? A new teaching?" Nicodemus listened to His wonderful words of wisdom and of life and exclaimed, "Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him."

No one can overestimate the tremendous revival of religion that would result if the Church would take seriously her God-given task of Christian education and follow its conscientiously for even a single generation!

Jesus understood the needs and capacities of people and, by appealing to the common experiences of their life, led them to think for themselves of the eternal realities of God. Everything led to the knowledge of God. He spoke of the birds, the flowers, the seasons, the clouds, the trees, the farmer, the merchant, the women working in the home, the little children, the

man who was robbed and the Good Samaritan who helped him. He told the story of the lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son, and the rejoicing when they were found. Through all His teaching He is leading people to know God.

The Church has reasons to take courage. More and more our schools and colleges and theological seminaries are placing emphasis on religious education. The teaching function of the Church is being recognized as of equal importance with that of preaching. As people are taught to know God they will love and follow Him. Educational evangelism outweighs emotional evangelism. Our missionaries realize the necessity of teaching. To win persons to discipleship through preaching and then leave them without adequate training is wasteful folly.

What is true on the missionary fields is equally true in the homeland. Provision must be made for the training of the parents of our scholars. This may call for a readjustment of our program and of our budgets, but its importance requires that we be ready to make the change, cost what it may.

As Protestants, we are far behind Roman Catholics and Jews in their emphasis on the religious education of children. But we are fast awaking to its importance. The Church Vacation School has become an important means of religious education of thousands of boys and girls during the summer weeks.

Week-day religious instruction by competent, paid teachers, for certain regular periods each week taken from public school time, and for which credit is given,

promises much for the future. The Church's responsibility extends to all the boys and girls of the community. Many more can be reached through the week-day school. The teaching is on a par with the best received from the trained teachers of the public school. It is more systematic, regular, and much greater in extent than the usual half-hour period of instruction per week, which is the average in most church schools.

Jesus not only led people to know God; He carefully guarded them. In this great prayer three words stand out as indicating the Master's interest in His followers: "I *pray* for them. . . . I *kept* them in thy name. . . . I *guarded* them, and not one of them perished." As our children or young people or even adults are brought to know God, do we thus guard and keep them?

It is not enough to baptize people and welcome them into our membership, then send them out into an unfriendly or even an evil atmosphere. More and more must the Christian Church assume responsibility for the social conditions surrounding our people. Some form of group organization in the churches of larger membership is essential. Every member who is led to know God must be prayerfully guarded, trained and enlisted in the service of the kingdom.

The organized young people's society under one name or another has been blessed of God for the past forty years as a means of holding and training the youth of the churches. To be most helpful it must always be used as a means and not as an end. Its program and form of organization will change to meet

the changing conditions of life and the changing methods of work in the Church. Thousands of Christian leaders in the pew and the pulpit, in the Church school and in the Christian college, in the home, in business, in the trades and professions, owe much of their training for leadership to some organized young people's society in the local church.

"That they might know thee" could well serve as the motto for all our Christian work. All programs and organizations, all preaching and teaching should be a means to that great end. With such a goal in mind no worker and no church can go far astray. This great ideal will give the Church a new passion and a new enthusiasm for our work.

The lack of an adequate knowledge of God is the source of the world's woe and misery. When we know Him as the God of justice we can no longer exploit our handicapped or weak brothers, it matters not what the color of their skin is or to what race or nation they chance to belong. From millions of toilers there rises today the cry for justice. When we know the God of Jesus we will want to give justice, because we will want to be like Him.

As we come to know Him as a God of love we can no longer allow hatred or fear or selfishness to lead us into war. And there is little use of trying to outlaw war through law, to overcome force through force. Let people come to know God as He is revealed in Jesus, the paragon of forgiveness and love, and evil will vanish like darkness before the rising sun.

After more than nineteen hundred years of Christian

effort, almost one-half of the human race is still without adequate means of knowing God. The Apostle Paul said, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him who they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" What a mighty challenge to the Church of the living Christ!

In this prayer, our Lord said, "O righteous Father, the world knew thee not, but I knew thee." In that statement we have the best explanation of the incarnation. "Jesus Christ, who existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of sinful men, . . . becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Why did Christ thus come? Why did He thus die on the cross? Because the world did not know God, but He did. Why did David Livingstone give his life in dark Africa? Why did he remain there even after Stanley found him and tried to persuade him to yield to the pleadings of England and almost all lands that he leave Africa and accept the bounties and honors that awaited him at home? Why did he remain even until his lifeless body was found on that tragic morning in the attitude of prayer? There is but one answer. The people of dark Africa didn't know God, but Livingstone did.

What keeps Dr. Grenfell away up in Labrador? We all know of his privations and also of the honors and high positions he might have in his home land. Why does he stay and suffer and work? Because the people of Labrador do not know God, but he does.

Why does that rural pastor remain away out in that home mission field? His family desire and need the comforts and educational advantages of the city. But still he toils on, underpaid, poorly equipped, often discouraged. He is there because the people of that lonely community do not know God, but he does.

Why do the brightest and best of our college students declare their purpose, if God permit, to go anywhere in any land to preach or teach the glorious good news of the Christ? The answer is evident. There are millions who do not know God, but they do know Him.

"That they might know thee." That was the mission of our Lord. That is the mission of His Church. For that mission our Lord came "not to be ministered unto but to minister and give his life a ransom for many." For that mission He expects the Church to give her best, her all. Let us not disappoint Him.

PRAYER

O Righteous Father, we thank Thee for light. May we have the mind of Christ, remembering that we, too, are the light of the world. Help us to let our light shine that men may know Thee. Bless the Church and all other means of extending the knowledge of Thyself until "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." In Jesus' name. Amen.

WILLIAM L. STIDGER

Dr. Stidger was trained at Allegheny College; and his Alma Mater granted him an honorary degree in 1923. Before coming to Detroit he held successful pastorates in San Francisco and San José, California. A year of observation at the principal mission stations in Asia together with a considerable experience in Europe has given him an unusual view of world affairs. Dr. Stidger has preached for the past five years at St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church. He has taken a Church in a fine residential section fully five miles from the city hall, and has made it a church of city-wide influence. The popularity of St. Mark's grows out of the popularity of its preacher, who has taken conspicuous part in every political venture of the city during these years. With considerable pleasure have I heard him say on a number of occasions: "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel." In a strange way he has combined in his preaching a love for the beautiful and a hatred for sham and evil. Now you hear him singing such a delightful song as his own, "When God washed the world last night;" and, again, you hear him with scathing rebuke calling down divine wrath upon social and political offenders. This sermon is typical of the poetical side of his nature, calling men away from the noise and confusion of artificial life to the natural and to the eternal. It is with regret that we learn of the recent appointment of Dr. Stidger to the Linwood Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in Kansas City.

A NEW HOMILETICS FOR AN OLD MESSAGE
—One of the most pressing needs of the ministry is a new homiletics. Having worked on this problem for the past ten years with many attempts at something new in this field, I have finally adopted, as a permanent part of my preaching program, these new homiletical forms:

1—The Drama Sermon.
2—The Dramatic Book Sermon.
3—The Dramatic Art Sermon.
4—The Symphonic Sermon.

I have tried the Symphonic sermon form for three years, and have discovered that this homiletic method is the most popular of all. The sermon which I have contributed to this book is Symphonic. It was preached in my pulpit on April 12th, 1925. I consider it to be my most typical kind of sermon, and am glad to pass on some of the things which I have learned in the laboratory of life and experience.—WILLIAM L. STIDGER.

XVII

ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE

WILLIAM L. STIDGER, D.D.
St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."
—Acts 13:48.

Symphonic Theme:
"He heard a voice none else could hear
From centered and from errant sphere."
—Emerson.

When Jenny Lind, the great singer, was in this country, she complained of the concert halls; that they did not give her voice enough room; that there was not space enough to unroll her voice; and she even exulted when she found great halls over railroad stations, and even the waiting-room because of their immensities. Jenny Lind's voice was ordained to great immensities. To be ordained to great immensities is one of God's gifts to the spacious souls of the world.

God's gift to Jenny Lind, a singing throat—a great organ of sound, ordained her to immensities. That voice found not its habitat in parlors and ante-rooms. It needed great spaces in which to unroll.

A Leviathan needs the sea to wallow in. It would fill up a pond, and it would crowd a Lake Erie. God made the sea for Leviathans to have room in.

It is always thrilling to a human soul to stand in

great immensities. To stand in the spacious reaches of a St. Peter's and to look up into that great dome above is to feel the stir of spaciousness. And, back of that great immensity is Michael Angelo, a man of spacious soul. He was ordained to do great things because he had great things in his soul.

No man or woman can look upon a Pacific Ocean, with its seven-thousand-mile highway of turbulent, tumbling, tumultuous, storm-tossed waters, without feeling the thrill of immensities. No wonder the woman from an inland town, who was visiting the ocean for the first time, said, upon being asked her first impressions: "It's the first time I ever saw anything there was enough of."

The Grand Canyon is one of the immensities of this earth; and that is the reason why a look into this abyss of beauty and wonder thrills our souls. It is because our souls were made for the great immensities.

We like to read about that six-mile-deep hole in the Pacific Ocean just off the coast of Japan. We like to think that a Mt. Everest could be dumped into that hole, and a Woolworth Building on top of it, and the two giants be buried hundreds of feet in that watery grave; so deep that ships could pass over the peak of the tower and not be ripped open.

One likes to go through the Mammoth Cave. The very name thrills us. It is our size. We like the calibre of that bore. It just suits us. We like to frame our lips to thunder that word, Mammoth. But to spend several days traveling through this unending

series of underground caverns; one hundred thousand miles of by-ways and tunnels in this cave region of Kentucky—that is an adventure in spaciousness. Our souls are framed to such. We are at home with the immensities, for we have spacious souls. We have been "Ordained to Eternal Life."

Emerson says: "The mind delights in immense time; delights in rocks, in metals, in mountain-chains, and in the evidence of vast geological periods which give these; in the age of trees, say the Sequoias, a few of which will span the whole history of mankind; in the noble toughness and imperishableness of the palm-tree, which thrives under abuse; delights in architecture, whose building lasts so long—'A house,' says Ruskin, 'is not in its prime until it is five hundred years old'—and here are the Pyramids which have as many thousands, and cromlechs and earth-mounds much older than these."

These gigantic physical things inspire great rhapsodies in the heart of mankind, from the humblest to the loftiest; because it might be said of man, when he is in the presence of these immensities:

"He heard a voice none else could hear
From centered and from errant sphere."

Because he is "Ordained to Eternal Life."

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF IMMENSITIES FOR SPACIOUS SOULS

The story of Creation is a story of great spaciousness. It took the whole universe as a setting for

Creation. Sky, earth, sea and space were needed. The Book of Genesis is a spacious thing because it deals with the immensities of the creation of the earth, the sea, the sky, the things that fly in the sky, the things that swim in the sea, the things that live on the earth—aye, even to the colossal-brained thing called man, rising to his feet, looking spacious things in the eyes: the sky, and storms, and stars, and God, and eternity. When God made man in His own image in the story of the first dawning, He made a spacious soul fit to look into the immensities of life; the greatest of which are God and Eternity.

In fact, the Bible is a book of immensities. The story of the Exodus of the Children of Israel is a racial movement. When you get an entire race of people up and moving—that is a thing of immensities. We get some idea of the bigness of this racial movement started by Moses when we see that gigantic motion picture, "The Ten Commandments." When we see Moses on Sinai, receiving the Commandments, see the lightning shrieking through the sky bombarding those great cliffs of stone with moral tenets, there is a suggestion of those immensities of life that always fit in with the spaciousness of the human soul, and its divine Father. When we get to dealing with the story of Creation, with time, skies, seas, earth, stars, racial movements and chronicles of people, we are dealing with the immensities; and that is the kind of stuff with which the Bible is filled from cover to cover. It is the Book of immensities written for the spacious souls of mankind.

The Holy Land is a little toy-land; small in proportions, miniature in size, but out of its limited borders came the hope of the world, the universal dream of mankind, and that is an immense thing which dominates the earth and the future.

The great movements of the Bible, the great dramas, needed all out-of-doors for a setting. Creation; the Flood; the Exodus; the Tower of Babel; the Elijah Whirlwind; Storm; Prairie Fire and Earthquake all of an afternoon; Job, the world's greatest Drama of Human Life; the Book of Revelation; the Life of Jesus; the Carpenter of Nazareth—there is something infinitely spacious about them all. They require great immensities for a setting. The Bible is a book of such immensities that we are appalled by them. They are the great immensities for the spacious souls, the souls "Ordained to Eternal Life."

MAN'S MIND IS BUILT FOR SPACIOUS THINGS

Man responds to spaciousness; he is framed for immensities; he is ordained to eternity.

Thomas Carlyle once said, as he stood on the seashore with his black cape flying in the wind, and his grey hair tossed and sea-wet; as he looked in imagination back into the past as far as creation; and as he projected his soul out beyond the Dog Star, and as he delved with his keen eyes into the bowels of the earth: "Man! Stands he not at the center of immensities, at the conflux of eternities?" Carlyle knew that man was "Ordained for Eternity." He was one who stood and said:

" He heard a voice none else could hear
From centered and from errant sphere."

I have noticed frequently that great men, as Emerson says, do not shine in private conversation, or in a small room; but give them a great hall and a great occasion, and they rise like giants. To quote the exact words of Emerson, I add: " But give such a man a commanding occasion and the inspiration of a great multitude and he surprises by new and unlooked-for powers." Then he adds a graphic figure: " Before he was as out of place and as unfitted as a cannon in a parlor."

When man stands naked in a prize ring, or broad-breasting the breakers of an angry sea, in the armor of a life guard; or when he stands at bat with a great club in his hands; or when he stands before an audience of twenty-five thousand people on the top of Mt. Rubudeau, he is at home and in his element, like a lion in the desert.

When you see him in his element, with something big enough to do, an environment big enough to house him, and a stage large and ample enough to stride and gesture on, you feel about him as Emerson says of Guizot: " What Guizot learned this morning he has the air of having known from all eternity."

Why?

Answer: Because some men are moulded in the mould of a mountain canyon, breathed upon by the cool winds of the seas, cast forth by an earthquake, and the mould destroyed in the grip of a volcano, sent

by God for that specific purpose. For he is " Ordained for Eternity "; and

" He heard a voice none else could hear
From centered and from errant sphere."

Some wise person has said: " If your eye is on the Eternal, your intellect will grow." That exactly sums up for me the thought of this part of my sermon. That is exactly why man's mind grows; because man's mind is always, consciously or subconsciously, on the Eternal. We think the Eternal, we dream the Eternal, we pray with the Eternal in our hearts and on our lips, we live for the Eternal, we plan for the Eternal, we act as if we were of the Eternal, and finally, we lie down and die, with great expectations that we shall awake sweeping out into the eternal on the wings of the " Winds before the dawn."

No wonder man's intellect grows so rapidly. No wonder he, whose mind was an animal mind a few short æons ago, is now a walking creature, an upright being that can look God, the skies and the stars of dawn in the face; a man " Ordained to the Eternal."

CHRIST'S DREAMS AND TEACHINGS, AND HIS LIFE WERE SPACIOUS

His birth was a spacious thing amid a spacious setting. He had the sky for the dome of His birth-place. He had an angel choir for His heralds, and He had a star to guide Him to the earth and to announce His coming. His birth had to do with the immensities of time and space.

He lived and walked, and died in spacious settings, for He lived in the out-of-doors all His days. He was seldom in-doors. He loved the mountains and the hanging stars. He loved the rugged trails, and crooned like a stream of prayer through the valleys. He prayed at night on mountain-tops because He liked to hear answer from the "Errant spheres." He loafed with fisherfolk beside blue Galilee. He was cramped in-doors; and the only time He ever went into the Temple in spectacular rôle to preach, He felt so suffocated and so bound-in, that He bulged out the giant shoulders of His wrath and literally rent the walls of the Temple apart so that all the world could see its inner filth and cess-pools.

Jesus was an out-of-doors man, partly by preference and mostly by pre-ordination. God had such things for Jesus to do that He needs must have all the out-of-doors to do them in. That was His "appropriate setting" to stage the events through, and in which He walked and stalked with tremendous tread.

He taught of a spacious kingdom, and lifted religion to new immensities. He gave religion and the kingdom, about which He talked, an international scope.

Some prophet, whose name I have now forgotten, said something that gives him a right to be forgotten. One can afford to be forgotten if he leaves such thoughts behind as his immortality in the hearts of men: "Jesus explains nothing, but the influence of Him took people out of time, and they felt eternal. A great integrity makes us immortal."

Yes, Jesus took people out of time and they felt

eternal. Why did Jesus do this noble thing? Because He knew that human beings were, by God, His Father, " Ordained to Eternal Life." And how did Jesus know to do this thing? Answer:

" He heard a voice none else could hear
From centered and from errant sphere."

THE CHRIST CALLS US TO A SPACIOUS LIFE

" Come up higher " seems to be the slogan of His spiritual message. He is calling up to more spacious living and to greater immensities of thought. God Himself gave Christ in that spirit; " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." There was nothing small about that idea. There was nothing puny in God's mind. It was " The World " that interested Him—that tugged at His heart-strings. There is a world-note in all of God's dealings with humankind. Let the one hundred per centers take no comfort out of this: and those who would cut out of civilization's benefits those of another color, or curve of cheek-bone, or kink of hair. God's Son was given for " The World."

Then Jesus in turn immediately trumpeted to the world His meaning and His message when He said, " I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly."

" Life " and " Abundance " are words that suggest great immensities, and spacious things of the soul; such as had never thrilled humanity's hope heretofore. Here was a man talking, who knew that man was " Ordained for Eternity."

Christ, too, talked clearly and positively of a "Spiritual" kingdom, and not of a "Material" kingdom. He was dealing in new immensities then. He was lifting His world into more spacious skies of the soul. He talked about a spiritual kingdom as confidently and as unconsciously as most men talk of England, Germany, Russia and the United States, and more so. He was dealing in new immensities, in things eternal. He had no time to waste in bitterness, in revenge, in defending His personal dignity. He had no time for "getting back" at people and "saving His face." He had no time to hate. He knew, with my dear friend, Edwin Markham, that there is no time to hate:

"There is no time for hate, O wasteful friend;
Put away hate until the ages end.
Have you an ancient wound? Forget the wrong
. . .
Out in my West a forest, loud with song
Towers high and green over a field of snow,
Over a glacier buried far below."

Men who have learned their divine kinship; that they have been, from the beginning, if they wish to accept this inheritance, "Ordained for Eternity"; men who live in these spacious soul-skies; men who inhabit these immensities, know that hate is such a puny thing; and that they haven't time for such. They live in the lofty regions:

"As some tall cliff that lifts its mighty form
Swells from the vale and mid-way leaves the storm,
While 'round its breast, the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head!"

Such are these men of the great immensities; these men "Ordained for Eternity."

And almost the last word that Jesus left was like unto the words spoken of His own coming to the earth. He told His disciples to go "Unto all the world, and preach." There was nothing local, or provincial about that command! There was no racial intolerance in that message!

And finally, He brought the thought of immortality to earth. The Egyptians did not have it. The Babylonians were frightened about it. The Hebrews were timid about it. But Jesus talked it, taught it, brought it and proved it on Easter morning long ago. He came that we might have eternal life. He came that we might know to the full that we were "Ordained for Eternal life"—we who would accept it.

An Arabian caliph who died as far back as 845, hoped, and dreamed, and prayed in the darkness of uncertainty: "O thou whose kingdom never passes, pity one whose dignity is so transient!"

In his essay on "Immortality," Emerson tells of two of his friends who were in the United States Congress. Both were men of great distinction, men of intellect, and they took an active part in the life of their day and generation. These two friends in Congress, in addition to attending well to their duties, often got together to talk over the things of earth and immortality. When one of them left Congress the two were separated for twenty-five years. Then finally they saw each other through open doors, at a distance, in a crowded reception room at the President's house

in Washington. Slowly they advanced toward each other, as they could make their way through the great crowd of brilliant people, until, at last they came face to face, grasped hands, said nothing; but shook hands long and cordially.

At last his friend said, "Any light, Albert?"

"None!" said Albert. "Any light, Lewis?"

"None!" said Lewis, and they parted, never to meet again, as the crowd swerved around them and closed in, and separated them. It was a sad parting.

But, there is light. We cry out this day: "Any light, God?" And the answer comes back through the gloom, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

"Any light, friend?"

Answer: "Yes, light eternal! Light through Jesus Christ. He came that we might have light and life abundant, and that we might swell in the immensities. This is His message, 'If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me'—into soul spaciousness forever."

Jesus knew that we humans were "Ordained to Eternal Life." How did He know?

He knew because

"He heard a voice wone else could hear
From centered and from errant sphere."

PRAYER

We thank Thee, God, that we were ordained for eternity. Lord God, our Light, Love and Laughter: In the holy hush of the happy hour we come to Thine altars to thank Thee that Thou art our Pacific Ocean, our Grand Canyon, and our Spacious Skies. Thou art the God of

"beauty, bread and brotherhood." Thou art the God of our immensities, and our imaginings. Thou art our nights, star-filled; and our dawns, sun-lit. Thou art our noons of peace and quiet; and Thou art our splendid sunsets of golden beauty, dripping with rose and amber. Thou art the ocean over which we sail for interminable days; the canyon into which we peer with awe and wonder; the skies to which we look for guidance and light.

Through these, Thy handiworks, we learn that we were ordained for Eternity; and for that thrilling thought we thank Thee. It hushes our hearts like the sound of music at twilight. Amen.

ROBERT WHITE

Bannockburn, Scotland, made famous by the signal victory of Robert Bruce, is the place of the birth of Robert White, receiving his education at Dunoon College and the Scottish Baptist Theological College, affiliated with Glasgow University. His pastorates in Scotland were at Leith and Alexandria, at which time he was President of the Edinburgh Ministers' Union, the Christian Endeavor Union of Edinburgh, and was Vice-President of the Scottish National Endeavor. His last pastorate before coming to Detroit was at the First Baptist Church of Brantford, Ontario. The Northwestern Baptist Church, where he is now located, is situated in the largest protestant section of Detroit, in what is known as the Grand River Avenue district. This church is notable for its work among men and boys; and under the wise and capable leadership of its present minister is making large contributions to this all important part of the city life. This sermon is characteristic of the writer, and reveals the secret of his hold on men. There is devotion and challenge in it—an irrestible appeal to the sacrificial spirit.

LIFTING THE LOAD—The true minister is a source of inspiration. His life is continually steeped in God. He appropriates those qualities of head and heart which are in Him; and then hands them on to a people through a living personality. Life is severe. We are richer than our fathers, yet we have more care. The modern minister must so preach that people will be put into a heartened attitude toward God and life; and, tackling the problems, temptations, and duties in a hopeful and masterful way, will transform them into rich food for powerful and spiritual personality. He, who brings Christ to men as the burden sharer, is wise, for he brings to them the dignity and the strength of human life ennobled by the spirit of Christ.—ROBERT WHITE.

XVIII

THE CHRISTIAN AS A VICTORIOUS PERSONALITY

ROBERT WHITE
Northwestern Baptist Church

"Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."—II Cor. 2:14.

In this sermon I express my own convictions regarding some problems of Christian living that might be more easily solved if we were greater and more victorious personalities.

A victorious personality is one who is sure of his relationships with God in Christ, who knows the range of his own powers, who is in complete possession of the spiritual treasures embedded in the Bible, who has real control over his faculties. He has no kinship with the divided self or the sick soul described by Prof. James in his *Varieties of Religious Experiences*. He is neither rent, torn, nor distracted, but so organized in his life as to achieve victory in every spiritual undertaking. His qualities are positive; and the expression of his character is as definite as his qualities. Defects of disposition are dealt with as trainers deal with vices in thoroughbred horses, for such defects undermine power. He understands that Christian work partakes the nature of his personality; that de-

fective personality means defective work; and that a strong and positive personality does strong and effective work. He knows that no Christian can put into his work what is not in his personality, any more than he can take out of his will what is not found there, and that a shallow personality will do shallow and slip-shod work to the end of his days.

I

Now, take the victorious personality in relation to literature. I do not say that it is necessary to know the connection between chemical constitution and physiological action, or the principal perturbations of the solar system, or even the ancient classics, to be a victorious personality; but I do say that it is necessary to know the Bible, and the Bible is literature supreme. In this literature we have the record of a progressive revelation of God given as man was able to receive it, and a record of the "redemption that is in Christ Jesus." We cannot be victorious in the spiritual life and remain intellectually sluggish. We cannot live the life of faith in the Son of God with untrembling assurance, unless these truths have become part of the texture of our intellectual and spiritual life. Power comes from being sure of facts, and when these facts are of the highest order they beget in us a flush of confidence which is always a preface to victory. It is then truer of us than it was of James Watt when he discovered the power and uses of steam, we have power to sell.

One outstanding feature of the Bible is the grand

stream of intellectual and spiritual energy which seems to pour forth from inexhaustible fountains. The writers are men of commanding and imperishable force; their intellectual march is stately and their powers have a wide range; they deal with the infinite as well as with the finite. Therefore, a Christian's intellect, through which his ransomed soul pours all it contains of God, can be keen with the keenness of the mind of God, accurate with His accuracy, and forceful with the throb of that infinite life which pulses in His infinite brain.

The victorious personality must have as the keywords of his life—progress, freedom, growth, and power. No sponge he, to absorb, to bloat, to die, but a being united in living mental attachment to every realm of this vast, vivid, varied, teeming universe. It is his to develop intellect to its supreme pitch of power; his to grapple in severe application with the great truths of revelation and redemption; it is his to assimilate that strong mental food which nourished the brain of Jesus, and which produces a life which carries the Church of God to victory.

The Church of Christ demands members of magnetic personality, of magnetic thought, with light in their imaginations, and whose logic is on fire; members who are vigorous thinkers, who carry into their life and work the freshness of a growing mind, the energies of a capable manhood. The New Testament urges that we grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, filled with the fullness of God.

Harold Begbie says of Christians that we must

either become the greatest of people, or the most mechanical and pharisaic. If in touch with divine realities, they shape us in spite of ourselves. We walk in the light of heaven, breathe its atmosphere, and are molded by its mighty powers. Like a gladdening river, heaven's life flows through us. There is nothing withered or barren, or numb in our faculties; no unhallowed sleep rests upon any power. Thought and speech are lit by light divine, for the mind is the radiant scene of the operation of divine thought. Temptations to idleness are occasions of triumph, and over every day floats the banner of accomplished tasks. We are more than conquerors over intellectual feebleness and death.

II

We must also be victorious in the realm of the heart. Life will make our hearts either big and hospitable as the heart of God, or partial and narrow as that of a village gossip. There are customs that strive to forbid free play between the Christian's soul and the Christian's God. We are required to do team-work with those who esteem etiquette more highly than spirituality, who positively will not allow the regnant ideas of the Gospel to govern them. There are those whose moral and intellectual convictions clash with ours, and who cannot clash without suspicion and bitterness. There is the struggle to enforce opinions, exert influences, establish customs—there is the conscious or unconscious struggle for mastery. Amid all these shall we retain our delicate sympathy? Shall

we be saved from all unwise severity, all harshness of judgment? Shall we issue from the struggle with a roomier heart in which even our bitterest opponents shall know that they have a hospitable place? We are Christ's servants, friends, disciples, and representatives, therefore we must crush, eliminate, and expel every tendency to be narrower in sympathy, love, hospitality, richness of pure feeling than the heart of Jesus; and we must resolutely cultivate the meekness of Jesus, which was the restraint of a most richly endowed personality, who had the power to be silent when smitten. This is the power that breaks sin and unifies the hearts of Christian people; the power that refines the soul and creates a beauty of behavior that wins others to Christ.

It is so easy to defend ourselves by a hard strength, but difficult to keep the heart soft, sensitive, and strong. It is easy to get hard when dealing with the hard; coarse when associated with the vulgar; bitter when misunderstood and maligned. This destroys our Christ-like disposition, power, serviceableness. We are kept big and broad and deep in love and sympathy by entering into fellowship with the disposition of Christ, who endured the contradiction of sinners, who resisted unto blood, yet remained unspoiled, and was able to bless and to save the very men who put Him to death. When we are saved from the sins that spoil our fellowship with God, we shall also be saved from the sins that spoil fellowship with one another. The breaking of our unworthy pride, the burning out of all that is mean and selfish, the destruction of all fretful-

ness and unworthy fears, the utter annihilation of unholy ambition, the earnest cultivation of gentleness, pity, fairness and holiness of life will give us a commanding place in the affection of God and true men, and will be a sure defense against the unclean purposes of any heart. We are disciples of Christ who accepted the unwelcome and the unpalatable in His own life, and who teaches us how to make these issue in fine devotion and noble character. It is ours, then, to be skilled in the art of drawing His mighty power into our impotent hearts, so that we may become masters over the desire to become avenged on those who do us harm.

Thus shall we enter more fully into the experience of His mastery over things mental, moral, material, and into the mystery of His death and resurrection. The sense of our relation to Christ will fill us always with a saving self-respect, with a love that does not behave itself unseemly, and that makes the life as glorious as the Christ to whom it is related. It is when the marks of Christ are discernible in our characters that even the wicked stand in awe of us. The life that has the sweetness of love, the dignity of grace, the strength that is gentle, the courage that is winsome, the words that are pure and wholesome, the disposition that is sunny, the touch that is sympathetic will ever endear itself to those who love Christians from whom all ill-feeling and unchristlikeness are washed away.

III

There is yet another realm in which the Christian

must be victorious if his life is to be of any lasting consequence—the realm of prayer. Would it be putting it too strongly to say that failure is due to powerlessness with God in prayer, this powerlessness issuing from defects of disposition? The glossing over of secret faults continues until we lose the boldness of sincerity. In this awful realm lie stupendous powers that have constantly moved the world forward on moral and spiritual lines. How shall these powers be transferred to us, operate in us, and through us, upon others? By severe discipline of character in the presence of God. Character is the basis of prayer—of successful praying—the measure of our power. A defective character means defective praying. God deals with realities in our lives, and relates Himself to these realities. He desireth truth in the inward parts. A false life cannot reveal a true God. A vacillating will cannot express the energy of an omnipotent will. We cannot import into our praying moments what is not ordinarily in our characters; therefore, a disciplined character forged and hammered into harmony with the will of God as revealed in Scripture, and enriched by the wealthy content of the spirit's life, is the character that triumphs in this holy sphere. Perseverance, intensity, self-discipline, concentration are the marks of the conqueror here. God's refusal to give except on the basis of a character in harmony with His word and spirit, produces in the aspirant for mastery the noblest kind of character. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."

Mirabeau says, "Nothing is impossible to the man who can will." We can will to get rid of our conscious insincerities that make prayer a modern species of incantation; and we can will to make our demands on God, for life and service, keep step with the growth of our characters, and our characters keep step with our demands upon God, so that our life may thrill with vital force. We must, if we are to please God, have the character that is at once kingly and priestly. This character must rest upon and grow up from the bedrock of reality. It receives its honor, prestige, glory, not from wealth, learning, position, but from its naked association with God. The power and glory born of this holy association are unique, inimitable, enduring. This priestly character is fashioned by the consciousness of its call to be a channel of Christ's fullness to the world, and the realization that we hear the world's need to Christ.

How shall this character be brought to the highest plane of usefulness? Train it. Work out your own salvation—for it is God who worketh in you. By the most ruthless self-discipline bring every thought, desire, feeling, propensity into subjection to Christ. Napoleon said that "impossible" is a word found only in the dictionary of fools. Jesus says, "Nothing shall be impossible unto you." Surely if Napoleon could get men to undertake forced marches without boots, win battles without cannon, perform prodigies of valor under his inspiration, Jesus Christ can inspire us to be greater men and to do greater deeds, even though they be in the moral and spiritual sphere.

To be at home amid the sanctities of God, to move harmoniously there, to know what God permits in relation to His will and omnipotence, and to realize that fully in one's own experience is to be master and king in every relation here. To achieve this we must concentrate the purpose, focus the desire, select the path and tread it, control the emotions, bring truant attention to task, harness the intellect and stop dissipating energy. The kingdom of heaven cometh not through committees, but through holy personality. Therefore concentrate, concentrate, concentrate. To perfect oneself here, to be master here, is to make life victorious in every other sphere. Crush every unregulated impulse, discipline every desire, chain every wandering fancy, follow the definite choice and life will be filled with the full power of God. By making large use of the Word and Spirit we can become those whom God will trust with the treasures of the eternal life for our sin-crippled fellows.

Turner, the painter, said: "I have no secret but hard work. Labor changes the world from ugliness to beauty." "The world belongs to the energetic," said Emerson. It is so here. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." Shape yourself and you shape others. Obey God and others will obey you. Be king over your own life and you will rule others. Be living enough to die as a grain of wheat dies, and you will find your life again amplified, and enriched with the life of God.

Brethren, it is true that people of like passions with ourselves have wielded uncanny powers through

prayer. So may we. Pay the price and you will get the treasure. This treasure is in earthen vessels. Put to death every passion of flesh and spirit that will not harmonize with God's will, and you will be filled with God. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

There is, then, a community of life, power, interest, grace, goodness, glory; and our characters bear a precision of resemblance to the character of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Father, Thou art our life, our only source of wealth and power. Work into our spirits the qualities of Thy life, so that as the flowers put on garments of gold, crimson, and purple through their association with the light, our spirits may be clothed with love, peace, and power through their union with Christ. Amen.

ROBERT WILLIAM WOODROOFE

Ingersoll, Ontario, is the birthplace of Robert William Woodroofe. The University of Toronto graduated him in 1902 and Kings College granted him the degree of M.A. in 1905. Later he took two years of graduate work at Columbia, majoring in sociology. In 1903 he was ordained Priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church. His later pastorates have been in New York, Philadelphia, and Cleveland. It was in the latter city that he was rector of the Immanuel Church from 1912 to 1922, accomplishing an outstanding piece of social ministry. For the past three years he has been rector at old St. John's, one of the several downtown churches in Detroit which refuse to live on their traditions. The major emphasis in his attractive and constructive preaching is placed on the many implications of the social teachings of Jesus; and under his inspiring leadership St. John's is working out one of the most varied and effective service programs in the city, giving opportunity for many outside groups doing constructive work to function through the free use of the church and parish house. His fellows have honored him this year by electing him recently to the Presidency of the Greater Detroit Council of Religious Education and also of the Detroit Pastors' Union.

LIFE'S GREATEST VENTURE—When I entered college, it was with the practice of Law in mind; but during my college course my thought was turned to the Christian ministry. All through my life I had been interested in the things of God; but I have a firm conviction that there is no vocation in life that provides greater opportunity for service in behalf of one's fellows than does the Christian ministry. The need of the world was never greater than it is today. The solution to the problems of our vexed modern civilization will be found in Christ, and in Christ alone. It is my firm conviction that when men come to an understanding of God's universal Fatherhood and of the Brotherhood of Man we shall see the establishing of the Kingdom. To be a Kingdom Builder is the finest venture of life. The ministry needs a passion for men. We must believe that the gospel of Jesus has lost nothing of its power to attract, and must be able to say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation."

—ROBERT WILLIAM WOODROOFE.

XIX

THE MASTER'S COMPASSION

ROBERT WILLIAM WOODROOFE
St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church

"And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things."—MARK 6:34.

The sight of a crowd is always impressive to any human soul who stands and watches it. It may be of any sort and gathered on any occasion. So today a great crowd is gathered, and as Jesus gazes upon it His great heart is moved with compassion. I like this word compassion. It means suffering with another; hence, sorrow or pity for another's distress or misfortunes. It suggests sympathy for, or kindred feeling with. It is more than pity; it is pity in action. How characteristic it is of the Master, Who Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.

He is lost in meditation and prayer; having sought to be alone with God in the silence. But all at once He becomes conscious of the presence of the great shepherdless crowd. He lifts up His eyes, and there is a quick response to their mute appeal. He looks down into their upturned eyes, and immediately gives Himself in answer to their claim. From that moment He is theirs—not even His desire for prayer must make

Him deaf and blind to human life appealing to Him, and seeking His help. Any day the murmur of the crowd would draw Him from the silence of the hillside. At once He feels the impulse of service when He confronts the world's manifold need.

The crowd, upon which He gazes today, represents a cross-section of human society. Try and picture, if you will, the various reasons that had brought it together. Many undoubtedly are come because they hope to see some miracle done by Him; for the fame of Him had penetrated to the most distant hamlet. They had heard how the blind had received their sight; how He had made the lame to walk; how the lepers had been cleansed; how the dead had been raised to life. They seek Him out today in the hope that He will manifest His power. It is curiosity that has brought them hither. Some undoubtedly are come because a hope has filtered into their hearts, that if He has healed others of their diseases then why not them? To experience His healing gift, they are present with Him today. It may be they do not need that gift for themselves, but are seeking it for a relative or a friend. Again, some are come hither because some great sorrow is laid upon their hearts. They know that He has a message of comfort for the sad, and they are anxious to hear it from His own lips. Finally, many are come because of a consciousness of sin. Standing there before Him today they are seeking His word of forgiveness, for they have heard how He has said to a paralytic, " Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee, go and sin no more." What a pic-

ture is presented to Him of human sorrow, sickness and sin. As then, so today, the need of the world is indescribably great, and Jesus proposes to Himself that He will satisfy it.

Thus Jesus looks out upon the crowded world with reverence and with pity. Not only does He see the crowd; but He sees the individual as well. And when He sees men it is with a sense of danger and of hope. But as He sees them, He determines with Himself that He will consecrate His whole being to their service. It was true then, it is true today, that "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for the many." If we could but see life as He saw it, we would consecrate ourselves to the service of humanity, and in a measure share in His Saviourship. For it is part of His redemptive plan for the world to use men.

"Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today:
He has no feet but our feet,
To lead men in His way.
He has no tongues but our tongues,
To tell men how He died:
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side."

Jesus values men, and this is the reason for His compassion. Every individual in that crowd that day was of intense value in the eyes of heaven. He sees infinite possibilities in every human soul. He knows that "Man is made for the infinite." In His day He

drew a contrast between a man and a sheep. He knew that in the average thinking of most men of His time, a sheep was estimated of more value than a man; for a sheep stood for property, or that which we get for our own profit. The valuations that we give to things today have not changed much; for the thought of "getting" rather than of "being" is still dominant in human life. What shall it profit? is the first question that we ask. In our search for things we often throw human life into the discard, and consider a sheep as of more value than a man.

The value of a man's life is uppermost in the mind of Jesus. The development of a character is of first importance. Even though a life has been marred and scarred by sin it is still of infinite worth in the eyes of Jesus. With Him the "Lost" man is too valuable and sacred to be lost. He is in the world for social restoration and moral salvage. No human being would go to pieces if He could help it. Not only was He willing to help those who came to Him, but He proposes to go after those who are lost; for "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." When He meets the woman at the well of Sychar, He is seeking the lost. He puts His finger upon the hidden sore in her life. By the power of His redeeming love, He transfigures her character. Going back to the city from which she had come, and in which she had been a notorious character, she becomes a preacher of righteousness, and many believe because of her word. They could see it in her face, they could read it in her changed attitude toward life. Something had hap-

pened, and they soon understand that she has met with Jesus.

Jesus never despairs of any human life; and we shall be at one with the spirit of Christianity if we approach all men with the expectation of finding beneath commonplace, sordid, or even repulsive externals, some qualities of love, loyalty, heroism, aspiration, or repentance. These qualities simply prove the divine in man.

Jesus stoops to the uttermost in His mission of help. No blind beggar's prayer ever went unanswered; no sorrowing mother ever crossed His path but to whom He was kind; no hurt child ever cried to Him, but whom He took in His arms and solaced his pain, saying, " Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God "; no sinning man or woman ever knelt before Him asking His forgiving love but to whom He spoke the reconciling word—" Thy sin is forgiven thee, go and sin no more." He, the great burden-bearer, lifted many a load and made heavy burdens light.

This is the very essence of the Gospel of Jesus, that the strong must bear the burdens of the weak. How different is Jesus' message from the message of science. Science says let them perish; the weak jeopardize the species. It preaches " The survival of the fittest." But Jesus says "No! Seek and save the lost." He preaches the survival of the most unfit. And this is the glory of His Gospel. But this same Gospel does not encourage weakness. It says be strong, make something of yourself; have a high ambition, for he

aims too low who aims beneath the stars. In our mission of help to the weak, we must always have a loving regard for human life.

We must have a profound sense of the sacredness of life as it is seen from the point of view of God. Jesus knows that personality is the one infinitely valuable thing in the universe. He has a profound conviction of God's care for the individual. This conviction is based upon His knowledge that God is a father, and that the very essence of fatherhood is individual care for the children. When St. Augustine pondered this great truth and thought of himself as one among so many, he was led to exclaim, " He loves us every one, as though there were but one of us to love." If I am apt to doubt the reality of that love, and to question the value that God places upon my life, I turn my eyes to the Cross on yonder hill, and there I see in that Cross not only the measure of human sin, but also the measure of God's love. " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." When I contemplate this evidence of God's exceeding love I am lost in wonder, because now I know that He values me. It is with the thought of the Fatherhood of God in mind that Jesus looks out over the great shepherdless crowd today, and as He looks, His heart is moved with compassion towards them.

And so the day wore on and He had done His full stint of work, for He had taught them many things concerning the kingdom of God. The sun is dipping toward the western horizon. It is well-nigh gone down, and the shadows of evening are creeping in. It

is now that His disciples come to Him and say, " This is a desert place and now the time is far past; send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread; for they had nothing to eat." There are great numbers of them, they argued, and the day is far spent, and this is a desert place. And so they satisfied themselves they were right in making this request of their Master. And they add, " Master, you have taught them these many hours, they have no right to expect anything more from you. Let them go now and care for themselves."

But this is not the way compassion works; for the Master immediately turns and addresses Himself to the disciples and says, " Give ye them to eat." In these two attitudes of mind, " Send them away," and " Give them to eat," we have presented to us a clear distinction between the human and divine points of view. The advice which the disciples gave to their Master from the moral point of view was sound. They were right as far as they went, but they did not go far enough. They would have done their duty, and duty is the great word to the moralist.

But Jesus knows another word, and this word is love, and love is larger than duty. He has a feeling of responsibility for the multitude, and therefore He takes responsibility for them. And if we are to share in the Master's compassion, as we face the world's need, we must believe that love commands a wider horizon, and entails a heavier responsibility than duty; for love is the great word in the Christian vocabulary.

A self-centered morality cannot save the world. Only a love which does not count the cost, and grows tender at the spectacle of human want, carries the spirit of Jesus. We should never forget the Master, Who, when He saw the multitude, took their sorrows and laid them upon His own heart. He felt He ought to help them and therefore accepts responsibility for them. So He turns to Philip and puts the question, "Whence are we to buy bread that these may eat?" And this He says to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do. And Philip answers, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one may take a little."

Then it is that Andrew comes to the rescue, and says, "There is a lad here who has five barley cakes and two small fishes"; but adds as he looks out over the great crowd—"What are they among so many?" But Jesus immediately relieves his misgiving, for He says, "Bring them to me."

How true it is that these disciples were face to face with the same difficulties as we are today when we confront a great multitude that must be fed. How often the suggestion comes, "Send them away"; "Let them buy food for themselves"; "What are these among so many; five barley cakes and two small fishes"; why the thing's impossible; "It can't be done." But let us, because of the difficulties and the problems which we meet, turn and ask what was the secret of this miracle of old? The first thing that strikes us is the splendid confidence of Jesus that it can be done. There He stands in the midst of it all,

and demands that their seemingly inadequate resources be brought to Him. He conditions the working of the miracle upon the receiving from their hands of their humble resources. It is only when they said, "Take it, Master, take it, it is only a little thing," and when His great loving hands took it and blessed it, that it went the round of the multitude.

The second thing that we notice is what our Lord trusted His disciples to do. He gives the food to the disciples, and the disciples make distribution to the companies of fifty, which had ranged themselves on the green grass. Jesus did not give it directly Himself, but used this ministry of the disciples. As then, so now, He trusts men to carry out His projects. No one ever believed in men and trusted men as Jesus did.

I have met, somewhere, a quaint old legend, that when the Lord returned to heaven the angel Gabriel asked Him, "Master, did you accomplish your purpose? Did you convert all men to be citizens of the kingdom?"

"No," He said, "I only founded the kingdom, and told a few men about it, and left it to grow."

"But, Lord, how will the world know?"

"Peter and James and John and the rest will teach them."

"But they may forget, or neglect or fail."

"They will not fail. I am trusting them."

And they did not fail. It is a solemnizing thought that Jesus is depending upon you and me in carrying out the redemptive purposes of His love. Let us ask ourselves, "Will I fail?" Not if we do what those

disciples did—bring our humble resources to Him, and after blessing receive them back from His hands, and then make distribution to the hungry multitude. Let us never forget that "His strength is sufficient for us."

And finally there is the resultant joy from a consciousness of a service rendered. Don't you suppose there was joy in the heart of the Master that night as He reviewed the work of the day? No task had been left undone. As He saw the multitudes departing was He not glad that He had had them as His guests, and that He had been to them the Master of the Feast. And we, too, if we accept His challenge, and out of the compassion of our hearts break with the world the Bread of Life, which He places in our hands, shall experience the Master's joy.

There is an incident in the *Life of Dr. Grenfell of the Labrador* which will illustrate what I mean. I shall tell it in his own words: "Nearly three years ago, I was going down south one day to answer a call in the winter in regard to a young boy of about sixteen, who had a diseased hip and thigh. A message came in about the middle of Sunday. It was a very urgent case. We started at once with the dogs, and as it was very urgent and the going was very good, the ice being hard frozen, I took a very light sledge and just a few other things—an axe and a rifle, and some instruments and started off alone. I shall never forget it. It was Easter Sunday, and the weather turned very bad before evening. I had to forego crossing an arm of the sea. I met a number of fishermen in a little hamlet by the

side of the arm of the sea, and being Easter Sunday, we read about the life after death, and about how Christ's body was recognized, and how His disciples expected to recognize one another, and about the realness that we had in our faith when life in Labrador or Hampstead is done. The next morning, at daybreak, I crossed the ice, but as it so happened, the sea that had been in over night had broken up the ice, and the surface had frozen over and, without knowing it, I was going over ice that would not carry. I struck the ice with my whip and found it would not bear, but there was no turning round. We had to gallop as hard as we could, but it was no use; we all went through, the dogs and myself. There was nothing to do but to cut the dogs adrift and see if they could get ashore. By God's providence one of them climbed out on to a piece of ice, and I had his long trace tied to me round one of my wrists. We got out on the ice and we drifted out to sea. All that night, and part of the next day, I drifted off out of sight of land. There was only a small piece of ice left, and I knew that if any moment the ice broke my last minute had come. But it was not so. By God's providence the men had seen me over night. I thought then of the reality of something that was so real, and on looking back on life—the joy of having had the honor of being allowed to serve was so real, and the presence of God was so absolutely real, and practical, that it bore me up. In the morning I hoisted a flag. I had to kill some of the dogs because I was soaked through and had hardly any clothes. I made a flag-pole, and put up my shirt as a flag, and

some of these men, who had seen me over night, managed to haul out a lifeboat over the ice and eventually came out and picked me up. These men were fishermen, great big strong men. They had seen lots of sorrows and troubles; they were not particularly given to sentiment; but every man as he jumped onto the small piece of ice as the boat came up alongside, took my hand and shook it, and cried, and never said a word. It was joy that made them cry because they felt the reality of the joy they had in saving a man's life."

The point of the story is plain. These hardy fishermen of the north seas did not have to do what they did. They might have remained in the warmth of their firesides, and left the man out on the ice-floe to perish. Dr. Grenfell need not have done what he did. He might have turned a deaf ear to the call of the Labrador wild, and had a lucrative practice at home. But no—they all felt the challenge to suffer and endure the one for the other, and because of this, entered into the richest experience of life—the joy of serving others. We, too, shall experience this joy, if forgetful of ourselves, we feel the responsibility for other lives, and say with the Master, " They need not go away."

Let us see humanity as nobly as He saw it that day; and seeing it, consecrate our lives to its service. If we do this we shall in some true deep and blessed way share in His Saviourship. But to enter into the joy of loving service we must first share in the Master's compassion, " Who, when he saw the multitude, had compassion." Let this be our prayer:

"O Master, let me walk with Thee,
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

"Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay
And guide them in the homeward way."

PRAYER

O God, the God of all goodness and of all grace, Who art worthy of a greater love than we can either give or understand: Fill our hearts, we beseech Thee, with such love toward Thee, that nothing may seem too hard for us to do or to suffer in obedience to Thy will. Help us to learn the great lesson of life that he who would save his life must lose it. Make us willing to invest ourselves in the service of others. May we see the worthfulness of human life as Thy Son Jesus Christ did see it. Let the grace of charity and brotherly love dwell in us; and fill our hearts with feelings of love, kindness, and compassion. Make us ever ready to show mercy and to forgive. Give us a passion for the souls of man, and grant that persevering unto the end we may gain a crown of everlasting life. All of which we ask in the Name and for the sake of Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Printed in the United States of America